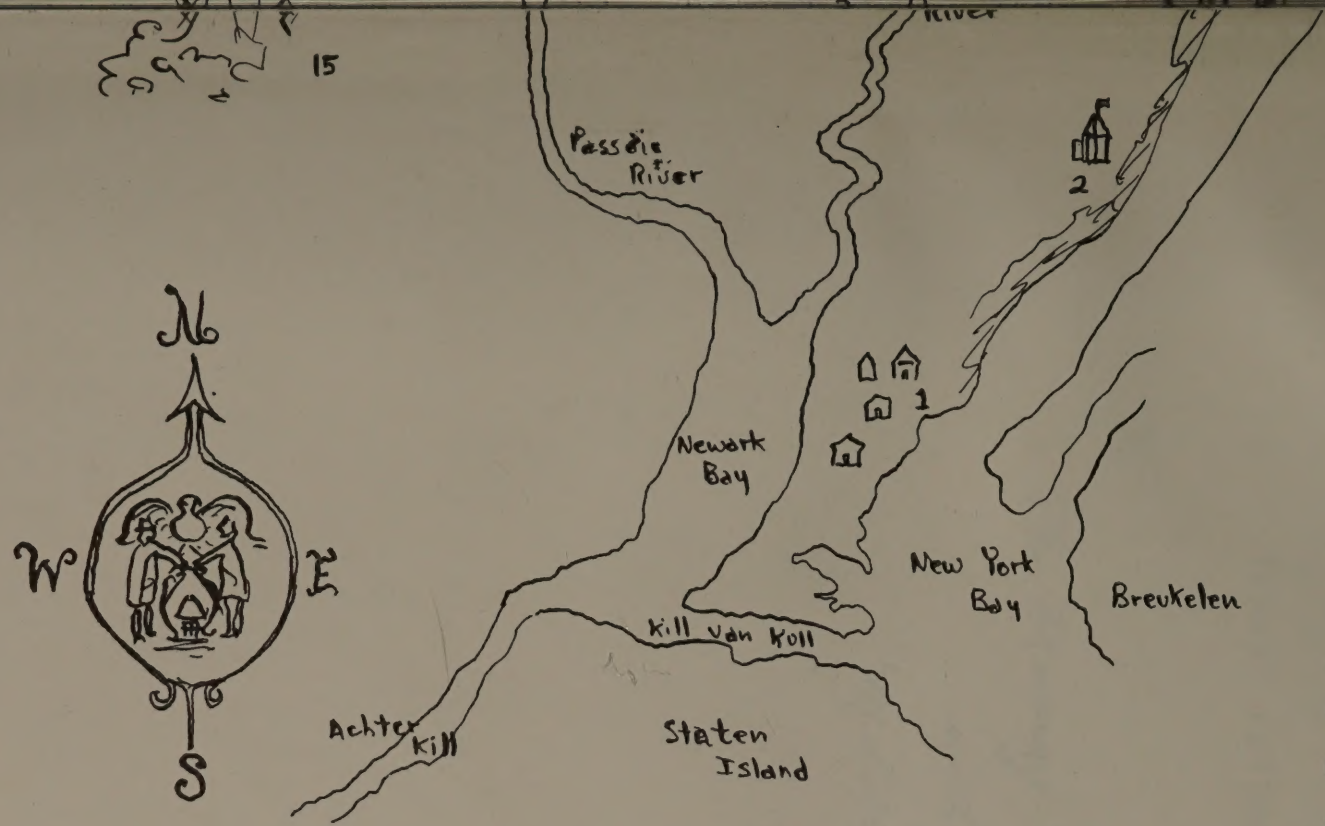
New York State
21
22
20
19
16
17
18
Ramapo Mountains
Ramapo River
To Ramsey
To Ramapo Pass
Saddle River
Pascack River
Hackensack River
12
13
11
14
Pompton and Morristown
10
Ho-ho-kus Brook
9
Saddle River Road
Palisades
7
Dunkerhook Rd.
8
6
Passaic River
Saddle River
5
4
Hudson River
Hackensack
Palisades
1. Early settlement at Bergen
2. Fort Lee



EARLY DAYS IN OLD BERGEN

4. Von Steuben House - Bergen County Historical Society
5. Oratam - Indian Wickams
6. Zabriskie or Red Mills
7. Great Rock - Glen Rock
8. Zabriskie House - Dunker Hook Road
9. Peremus Kirk
10. Hermitage
11. Johannes Ackerman + Arrow Maker
12. Garret Ackerman House
13. Van Alen House - Headquarters
14. Ponds Church
15. Great Falls (Passaic Falls)
16. Garrison House
17. Hopper House - Headquarters
18. Ramsey Historical Society
19. Robert Erskine · Ringwood
20. Suffern's Tavern
21. Claudius Smith's Hideout
22. Present day Route 17 to Sidman's Clove in Ramapo Pass

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TURKEY FEATHERS

To

The Murray Family
with love
Mildred and Bill

TURKEY FEATHERS

Tales of Old Bergen County

by

ROSA A. LIVINGSTON

Published by

PHILLIP-CAMPBELL PRESS, INC.

(formerly the New Jersey Geographical Press)

Little Falls, New Jersey

1963

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DEDICATED

to

My Daughter Rosamund Livingston Taufic

My Grandchildren

Buddy, Peter and Julia

And to the Memory of My Son

Walter F. Livingston,

2nd Lt., United States Marines

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my first debt of gratitude to dear Aunt Anna G. Knapp who planted the tiny seed of interest in American history in my subconscious childish mind. Because of her remarkable knowledge of family genealogy I became aware that my ancestors and everyone's ancestors had been live participants in the story of our country's past. By our many pilgrimages to museums and historic sites, I learned how people lived. Although I did not realize it, I was thereby dedicated to my serious avocation which actually came to fruition years later.

I am eternally indebted to Henry D. Cook – former pastor for forty-five years of the Paramus Reformed Church, Ridgewood, New Jersey – a consecrated man of God whose Sunday sermons were frequently interspersed with the recital of historical episodes connected with the church and the surrounding countryside. His profound knowledge of church history and his consciousness of the immediate urgency to collect and preserve all material possible on the local scene, especially that connected with the Revolutionary War period, had a lasting influence on my life's work. It was through the earnest efforts of Mr. Cook that the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society was organized.

Not only my own gratitude but that of the entire community is due to Miss Hilda Edmester – former third grade teacher in Ridgewood – who believed that children should learn the backgrounds of their home towns. By her enthusiasm and position, I became involved with her classes in their study of local history. Guided tours to the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society Museum and the historic church were thereby introduced into school curriculums.

A debt impossible to repay is due to Mrs. "Sue" Hudson, author, librarian and my associate on the museum staff of the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society. By her friendly guidance and constructive criticism my collection of history stories actually took book form.

I hold invaluable my associations with Miss Edith Fillmore Millard, Miss Florence de la Montange Bunce, Mrs. Emma McGrayne, Mrs. Everitt Law Zabriskie, Mrs. Laura Bogert, Miss Marion Leamon, John C. Storms and R. Floyd Tremper. Some of these wonderful people lived well beyond the Biblical three score years and ten – spanning the period from the Civil War to 1962. Some were teachers, writers, and authorities of local history, Americana and the Jersey Indian;

others passed on to me recollections about folklore and homespun yarns that might have been lost forever. By their very lives pages of history were written.

It is impossible to express my never-ending appreciation to my sincere friend – Miss Dorothy Ware – specialized teacher connected with the Saddle River school system. By her professionally trained mind, her constant encouragement and well deserved criticism, this little book was completed.

Also many thanks are due to Dr. Ann Dunhan, formerly connected with Cornell University, editor of the "Owl", Ridgewood Audubon leaflet, and at present engaged in special scout work. She gave generously of her precious hours in helping to edit my stories.

It was Mr. James Ransom, historian whose research efforts at present are directed toward iron mines and foundries in this area, who greatly stimulated me by his faith and youthful enthusiasm for my collection of stories.

Perhaps more than to anyone else, a great debt of gratitude is due Mr. James Gleason who is the Co-ordinator for the social studies in the elementary schools of Ridgewood. When this newly found friend read my stories he was sure they would fill the need for stories on the local history level for children. I also thank my publishers for their patience, interest, and encouragement.

FOREWORD

The stories in this little book happened within, or near, the old-time boundaries of Paramus in northern New Jersey and in Rockland County, New York. Some historians claim that old Paramus began north of Hackensack and extended to the foothills of the Ramapos, about where the towns of Suffern and Hillburn, New York are today.

In the Indian language, the name Paramus, or Peremus, or Peremesse, or Pyrimus, or any of a dozen other spellings, meant "land abounding in wild turkey." From this old-time origin comes the name of this book, "Turkey Feathers."

All the stories are based on historical facts, family records or local folklore. Some of them have never been written down, but were passed by word of mouth from one generation to the next.

On the old-time maps within these pages are roads and rivers which can be traced on modern road maps. Also marked are church sites familiar today and homesteads identified by family names of persons in these stories. Some were patriots, others were Tories. Some were made of hero stuff, others simply did the work at nand day by day. All, whether right or wrong by so doing, recorded their deeds for posterity. The patriots, both young and adult, contributed to winning our freedom. Today this precious heritage is the responsibility for each and every one to safeguard unceasingly.

When writing about these people who lived long ago, I have used my imagination only in order to make them come alive to readers of the 20th Century.

Rosa A. Livingston

Paramus, 1963

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ORATAM, CHIEF OF THE HACKENSACKS

The Lenni Lenape Nation of Indians lived in New Jersey many hundreds of years before any white people came. In the Indian language, the name "Lenni Lenape" meant "Very Original People" of the Grandfather Tribe.

One great chief in those early days was named Oratam. The Chief was very proud to have the name of Oratam, and his family tribe, the Achkinheshacky, were very proud of their chief. They knew that he had earned his name because he had always been a good, wise and friendly man and that was what his name meant: a good, wise and friendly man.

Therefore, the chief's name fitted him as neatly as his deerskin moccasins fitted his two swift feet.

Oratam's people carved the turtle on the totem pole that stood in their village and Oratam signed his name by making marks that looked like the front foot of a turtle.

The Hackensacks had the nickname of "Tide-water" Indians because they gathered shells along the Hackensack River after the ebb tide had lowered the water and left the banks bare and dry.

Some hours later the high tide rushed back again from the Atlantic Ocean miles away and the salt water rose deep in the river. Then the Indians heaped the shells in their dug-out canoes and paddled across the Hudson River to trade with the Indian tribes on Manhattan Island and with other tribes on Long Island.

The Wickams of the Achkinheshacky

In the early summer as soon as the sun grew hot, the Hackensacks and other Indians left their winter camping grounds up in the valleys between the hills in New Jersey. They gathered their families together and in their dug-out canoes paddled down the Ramapo River, down the Passaic River, down the Hackensack and the Saddle Rivers.

They crossed what is now called Newark Bay and then they paddled into the narrow waterway called "Achter Kill" to the west of Staten Island. There some of the Indian families camped on the sandy beaches. But other families went farther south to the Jersey Shore.

The Indian men, women and children spent the lazy summer months catching fish and crabs and digging for clams. The powerful sun and the fresh ocean breezes made their brown bodies tingle and the men and boys felt very strong and happy.

All through the summer, the Indians swam in the Atlantic Ocean and dove through the waves until they were tired. At last they ran out of the water onto the warm, clean sand to rest.

In the evening after the sun had set and the sea breezes had freshened strong and brisk, the children thought that the cold winds of winter, when food was often hard to find, would never come again.

After the camp fires were lighted on the beach, the women cooked the evening meal, while the children gathered around the Old Wise One and begged him to tell them stories.

The Lenni Lenape boys and girls loved to hear about their ancestors who had lived long ago under the ground in the far western part of America. Back in those days the world was new and the Indians believed that a great turtle carried the whole earth on its back.

But the children were impatient to hear their favorite story about the wolf that helped their ancestors out of their

dark home under the ground and showed them the sunshine.

"At first," said the Old Wise One, "the sun hurt their ancestors' eyes and they went back into their homes under the dark earth. But the people remembered the beautiful warm sun, and soon they left the darkness and never went back again."

"After many years the Lenni Lenape Nation left their old homes in the west. They traveled east mile after mile, over the high mountains and low hills and across big and little rivers."

"By and by, our ancestors found a beautiful land where they decided to live. They called the place Sheyechbi, and that meant 'the land along the water.'"

"That same land is your home now," said the Old Wise One. The Indian stood up and looking into the night sky bright with stars, he said a prayer to the Great Spirit for the children.

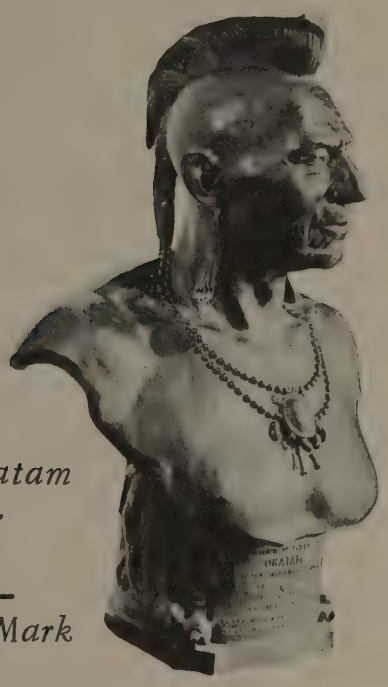
Later white settlers called the land Sheyechbi, New Jersey, and the waters bordering it are the Atlantic Ocean, the Hudson River and the Delaware River.

For many years Oratam and his people lived in peace with their Indian neighbors and the white settlers who came

to live nearby. The white settlers, as well as the Indians, learned that the chief was a good, wise and friendly man, so that everybody asked him to give advice on many important matters.

Oratam died in 1667, when he was a very old man. The Hackensacks wished to honor their great chief, so they formed a fine procession of canoes on the river. They took their chief down the river to Staten Island. There they buried Oratam in the summer land, where they had all been so happy together.

Almost 300 years have passed since Oratam and the Hackensack Tribe disappeared, but in the von Steuben Museum at New Bridge on the Hackensack River, there is a bronze bust of the great Indian chief. The museum is open



Oratam

His Mark

to everyone and you may see for yourself what a big handsome man Oratam must have been.

Although this Indian chief is almost forgotten today, his name is still used in the City of Hackensack. There are movie theaters, a bank, a clubhouse and a parking lot, all called by the name Oratam. Sometimes the chief's name is spelled Oritini.

Also, if your eyes are very sharp and quick, you may see a picture of Oratam's head painted on the doors of the Hackensack police cars!

WHITE AND PURPLE GRAPES

Several miles north of the Indian village in Hackensack two other chiefs lived with their people. The chiefs, or sachems, were named Wearimus and Masonicus.

Here ran the fresh, clear Saddle River, where trout and bass and many other kinds of fish provided the Indians with plenty of food. In the valley were also many rabbits, squirrels, raccoons and other small animals. Also, there were ducks, the wild passenger pigeon, and great flocks of turkeys. And especially because of the turkeys, the area was named "Paramus" meaning, in the Indian language, "Land abounding in wild turkey."

High and low rolling hills bordered the Saddle River valley on the east toward the rising sun and toward the west where the sun set. Here in the hills, wild grapes grew in great abundance and they were very good to eat.

Now, it is very strange, but old stories say that on the low hills to the east of the river, where Chief Wearimus lived with his tribe, the grapes ripened into large glistening white balls.

But to the west of the Saddle River, where the sun hid behind the high hills very early in the day, the grapes were purple. Here lived Chief Masonicus and his tribe.

Throughout the hot, sunny summer days, the Indian children and their families watched the clusters of grapes hanging from the branches grow bigger and bigger.

But Wearimus and his people, and Masonicus and his people, knew that too much sun would wither the precious grapes, so they prayed to the gods for some rain. And the rain came and made the grapes juicy and plump.

Then, one day toward the end of summer, the great golden sun kissed the white grapes once more on the low hills where Chief Wearimus lived. The grapes were ripe at last and the children clapped their hands and the grown-up Indians were very happy. Their grapes were beautiful, glistening white balls weighing down the stout vines.

At the same time, over across the valley, glad shouts could be heard from the high rolling hills where Chief Masonicus and his people lived. The purple grapes were ripe, too.

The Indian children climbed up the trees and gathered bunches and bunches of grapes from the vines that had twisted around the branches. They ate and ate until they were filled and their faces and hands were covered with the

sweet grape juice.

All through the warm days in the fall and the moonlit nights, there was much visiting back and forth between the friendly people of Chief Wearimus on the low hills and the friendly people of Chief Masonicus on the high hills.

Before the cold frosts of winter came, the Indians brewed a drink from the crushed grapes and they drank very often with their neighbors. The braves smoked the peace pipes and passed them from one red brother to another.

But the sweet grape juice soon changed into rich, powerful wine. After that, the voices of the Indians grew loud and rough and sounded like the voice of the Thunder God.

The Red Men's tempers were sharp and swift as the tongue of a rattlesnake. Peace and friendship between the tribes of Wearimus and Masonicus were forgotten. The people became deadly enemies.

The Indian braves made their faces ugly with war paint. They picked up their bows and aimed sharp-pointed arrows at the hearts of their neighbors. Stone tomahawks flew from strong hands, and many Indians of both tribes lay dead.

Very fierce fighting went on all day long until the sun

went down, staining the high hills in the west an angry red color. Then all was still in the valley.

After that dreadful fight, the old stories say, almost all of the grapes died too. Year after year, fewer and fewer white and purple grapes grew on the low hills of Wearimus and the high hills of Masonicus.

Today, not one wild white grape can be found. But up in the hills away from the highways, some purple grapes still climb over old stone walls and hang in clusters from the branches of trees on abandoned farms.

And what about the two chiefs? Both Wearimus and Masonicus have been dead for many years and their tribes are gone forever.

But the chiefs' names, like Oratam's, are used today. The proud name, Masonicus, is a street in the town of Suffern, New York, which is over the border, north of Bergen County. Also a whole hilly section in the town of Mahwah, New Jersey, is known as Masonicus.

What about the other proud chief, Wearimus? Once people called a place in the hills above the Saddle River "Wearimus." The name was said to mean "where wild grapes grow."

Today, his name is on a signboard that reads "WIERIMUS ROAD" and points over the hills.

"What a strange name!" says today's traveler in a passing car. "Wonder what Wierimus means" — and off he rides. But you and I know. Once long ago, Wearimus and Masonicus were names of Indian chiefs, who lived with their people on the hills beside the river where the white and purple grapes grew.

YACOB AND THE INDIANS

Long ago, when Oratam was chief of the Achkinheshacky tribe, the Lenni Lenape nation claimed New Jersey as their territory. People in Holland and people in the other countries of Europe began to hear about beautiful, free America.

They heard about the tall fine trees in the forests. They heard about the dark fertile earth that would make rich farmlands. They heard that the rivers were filled with fish, and they heard about the precious thick furs of the otter, the beaver and other animals.

The people were also told that the Indians loved to trade these furs for trinkets and beads and other things that the white men had.

Of course, all these stories about the wonderful free country made some people decide to leave their old homes. The Dutch, especially, wished to trade and barter with the Red Men. So, in 1662, a ship called the *D'Vos* sailed from Holland to America with 28 men, 10 women, and several boys and girls on board.

Captain Yacob Huys of the *D'Vos* listed in his ship's log Jan Le Chaire, who was a carpenter; Piere D'Mare, who made shoes; and Souverain Ten Houte, who was a baker.

Also in the book were the names of David A. Ackerman and his wife, Lysbeth DeVilliers Ackerman, and their six children. Another passenger was Albrecht Zaborowski.

Albrecht had been born in Poland, and some people say he was a cousin to the king. He was twenty years old when he landed in New Amsterdam.

After a few years some of the settlers went to a part of the new country that we call Bergen County, New Jersey. At first Albrecht built a house in Hackensack. Later he and other settlers decided to build homes in the woods along the banks of the Saddle River in Paramus.

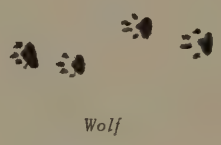
Before long Albrecht fell in love and married a young girl whose name was Machteld Van Der Linde. After a while they had a big family. Their sons were named Yacob, John, George, Henry and Christian.

The Zaborowski home was built of brown sandstone and the roof was thatched with straw. The house had only one, or maybe two rooms, and as the family had so many children, they must have been very crowded.

One day a terrible thing happened. Yacob disappeared! After his father and mother and all the other settlers had hunted for him everywhere and could not find him, they feared that the Indians had captured him.

Yes, Yacob was taken away to live with the Indians in their wickams. His skin soon turned brown in the hot summer sun. In winter he learned to catch fish through the ice that covered the quiet pools along the Saddle River. He learned how to track animals in the snow and in the deep forest with his Lenape friends.

Bear



Wolf

Fox

Raccoon

Yacob practiced with bow and arrows so that his aim was true and he became skilled in killing fur-bearing animals. Then he gave the furs to the women and they made clothes for the Indian men and children, and some of the skins the women made into soft rugs.

Yacob hunted rabbits, squirrels and birds, and these he gave to the women and girls too, and they cooked the meat over the camp fires.

But most important of all, Yacob learned to talk with the Indians. He used the Lenape words in the Indian language, just as his companions and their parents did. Soon the white boy became a favorite of the chief.

Yacob soon realized that his captors did not mean to harm him, but he could not understand why they would not let him go back to his family and home.

The days, weeks and months went by, so that a long, long time had passed since Yacob had been taken from his parents. In fact, Yacob was no longer a small boy. He had almost grown into a man.

Then one day, unexpectedly, the Lenape Indians said that he could go home! Yacob was very much surprised and he asked the chief why he had been kept a captive for such a long time.

"You smart and good boy. Now you grown big. You know Lenape words like Indians do. You go home. You help us do trading and other business with white settlers."

Yacob was very happy to go home, but he was also a little sad as he said "good-by" and turned away from the chief and the other Indians, whom he had learned to love. Then he hurried through the forest toward home.

After awhile, the Lenapes deeded a great tract of land, called the Paramus Patent, to Yacob's father and mother. This gift was to show how grateful the chiefs and their people were, not only to their young friend Yacob for his help, but also to his parents for their many honest business dealings with the Indians.

On the important deed, four Indian chiefs named Coorang, Srikhorn, Nemerizkon and Wattarenry made marks be-

cause they did not know how to write their names. One chief made a mark that looked like a snake.

Sometime later, Yacob's father gave him part of the land in the Paramus Patent so that he could become a farmer.

Years passed, and another Yacob in the family built a mill on the Saddle River and called it Red Mills. On maps today, Red Mills is marked Arcola.

Yacob, the mill owner, became rich and important, and his neighbors nicknamed him King Yacob, after his ancestor.

From that day to this, Zaborowski families have lived within a few miles of the original Paramus Patent. However, instead of spelling their name ZABOROWSKI or SABORISKI, they now spell it ZABRISKIE.

THE SETTLERS BUILD A KIRK

In the new Paramus settlement where the Zabriskies lived, other families came too, and built brownstone houses. After they were snug and warm in their homes, and after their barns had been built for the animals, the people began to think about building a church (or kirk, as the Dutch people called it).

The church in Hackensack where their grandparents had settled, was too far away from their new homes in Paramus. Therefore, the Ackermans and the Zabriskies and the other families gathered in each other's homes on the Sabbath day to hold church, sing their hymns and say their prayers.

In the spring of 1725, the people called a meeting together to make plans for their own Dutch kirk. The men talked over how big the church should be, how tall the steeple should be, and what shape the church should be.

After that, they discussed where the church would stand and where they would get the money to buy the land.

Then came a wonderful surprise! A wise and generous

man, named Peter Faucounier, said he would give the people land for the new kirk. No, he would not take any money for the property, but he wished the people would do three things.

First, would the people give Peter, his wife and his family seats in the church for their very own forever and ever? Next, would the people promise never to ask the Faucounier family for money, except to help pay the minister? For his third wish, Peter asked the people to keep five or six seats in the church free for any person who was very old or deaf.

"Yes," was the answer to all three of Peter's wishes. Even today, after 200 years, these promises are kept.

Now that the land had been given to the settlers, they were impatient to build their new church. But ten years passed before the plans were all finished.

Finally, men were sent into the forest with their axes to clear a space for the Dutch kirk to stand. The place chosen was on top of a small hill or knoll above the Saddle River.

All around the knoll was a wilderness. In those faraway days, there were no cars or trucks speeding on Route 17. There were no roads or highways at all. There were no

hurrying people on crowded streets, because there were no towns or streets anywhere.

Near the property for the church were only narrow foot trails, winding under the tall forest trees.

All around was silence, especially when the white snow and ice of winter silenced the noisy little Saddle River. But when spring melted the ice, the river ran free, birds sang in the branches of the trees, and the busy honey bees hummed and buzzed.

But new sounds came to the forest. Men's voices were heard in the woods, calling out the warning, "Watch out!" as a giant pine tree crashed to the ground. Then their tools made hard sharp sounds as the trees were cut into building material for the new kirk.

Other men harnessed up teams of oxen to tug and drag the sandstones, which had been cut and chiseled into suitable sizes. The stores were then piled up to form the walls of the new kirk.

The oxen did another job. They were led down to the wet banks of the Saddle River and driven back and forth so that they trampled up the mud. The men took the softened mud and mixed hog's hair and straw in it. This "puddled

mud" or mixture was called mortar and was put between the stones so that the wall was as strong as though it had been cemented.

Mixing Puddled Mud for Mortar

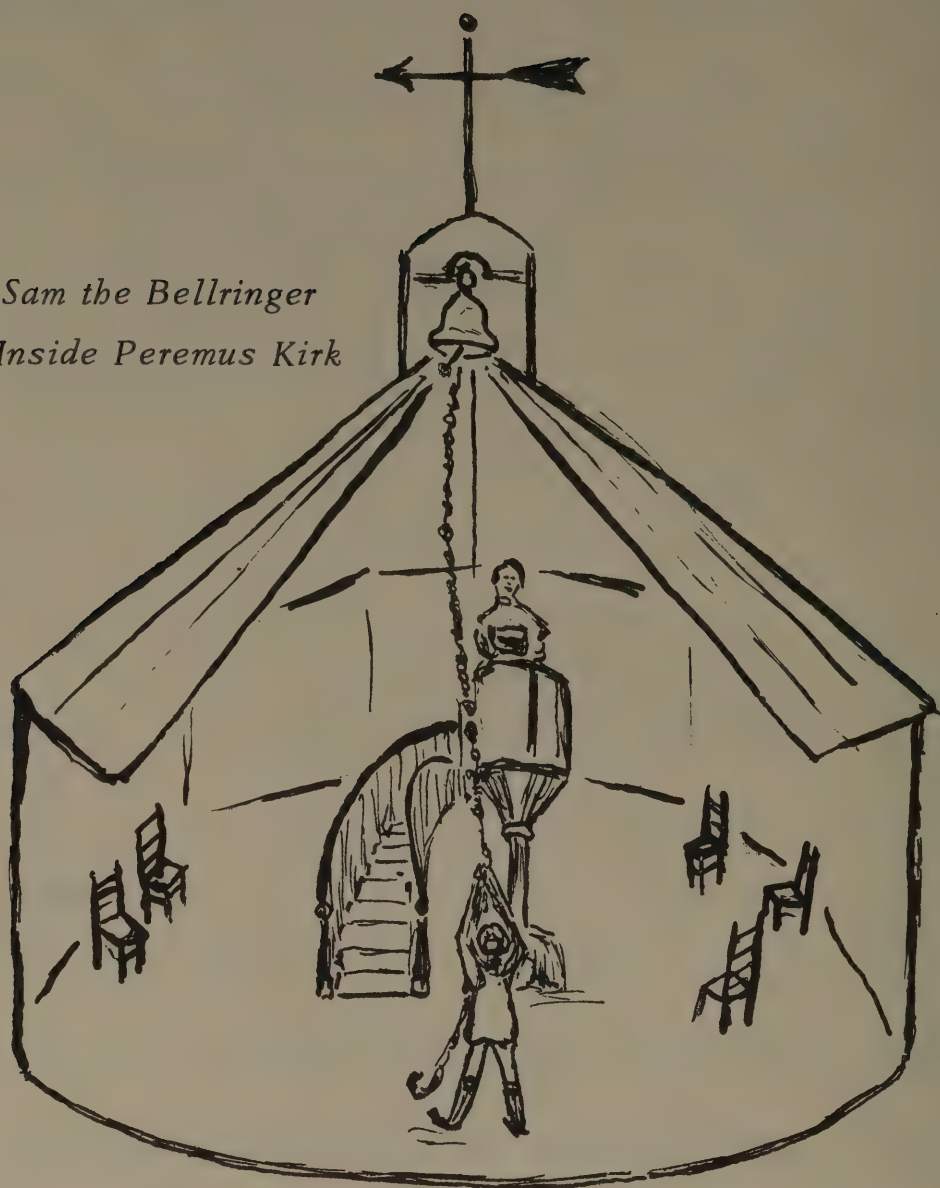
The settlers built a many-sided church with an octagonal-shaped roof. This meant that the roof had eight sides.

Inside the kirk, the pulpit for the dominie or minister was placed in the middle, and chairs, owned by each person and often marked with initials, were placed in a circle.

The roof of the new Dutch kirk was built up into a pointed steeple. From the steeple, where the bell hung, a long rope reached down into the center of the church above the heads of the dominie and the congregation.

On the Sabbath, the children loved to hurry into the kirk before their parents, so that they might watch Old Sam, the bell-ringer, as he reached up and pulled the rope. "Ding-

dong, ding-dong, time for church, time for church," called the bell in the steeple.



Sam the Bellringer
Inside Peremus Kirk

On the Sabbath, most of the families walked to kirk. In warm weather, many of the people walked barefoot and carried their shoes until they came in sight of the church. This saved their precious shoe leather.

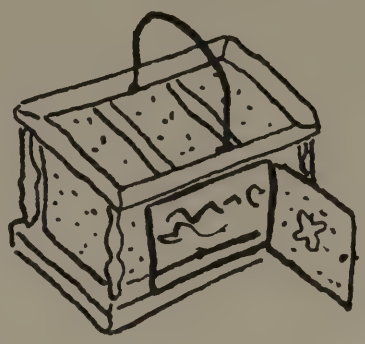
In winter, when the snow lay deep on the ground and the wind blew cold drafts through the cracks around the

windows and under the door, the kirk was very, very cold and uncomfortable.

No one had ever heard of an oil burner, or any kind of furnace at all. But the settlers had small tin or metal stoves with handles that they carried to the kirk, as you might carry a basket.

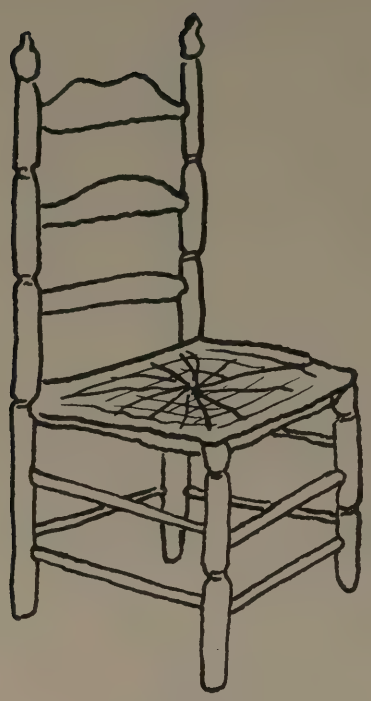
Early on the Sabbath morning, the men folks filled the little tin trays in the stoves with hot wood charcoal embers from the fireplaces in their homes.

Jan's mother had a beautiful tin stove, or footwarmer, that was decorated with pierced hearts and her initials. Jan's father had made it as a special present.



In the kirk, while the long service went on and on for several hours, Jan loved to snuggle up to his mother, as she sat on her ladderback chair. He would put his cold little feet beside hers on the cozy footwarmer on the floor in front of her.

For many years after the first Dutch kirk was built, fathers, mothers, boys and girls came from miles and miles around to pray and sing, and hear the dominie, or the voorleser, read from the big Dutch Bible dated 1729.



Today, this same old Bible, two of the old-fashioned footwarmers, and one of the ladderback chairs, used by the early settlers in the first Dutch kirk, are in the museum of the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society in Ridgewood, New Jersey. You and anyone else may see them whenever you wish.

But even though these relics may be seen today, of course, no one is alive who ever saw the first Peremus Kirk, but we think it looked like the picture on this page.

SCHOOL DAYS IN PARAMUS

Although the most important happening in the whole week for the early settlers was the Sabbath day service at Peremus Kirk, the fathers and mothers thought that school was important, too.

So even before a schoolhouse was built in Paramus, the boys and girls were taught to read and write and do cyphering in one of the settlers' brownstone houses. Lessons were taught by the minister or the voorleser because

everybody thought he was the wisest and the smartest man in the settlement.

In those days, the children walked to school even though their homes might be miles away. No one had ever dreamed of such things as bicycles, cars or buses.

Nearly all of the farmers owned horses or a team of oxen, but the animals were only used for the heavy farm work.

On bright days in the fall it was fun to walk through the woods to school. The children often stopped on the way to hunt for butternuts, walnuts and prickly chestnuts that lay half hidden under the brown leaves.

Big Garret put the nuts on a flat rock and cracked them open by hitting them with a small round stone. Yacob, Jan, Effie and all the other small children stood in a circle waiting for their share of the sweet nut meats.

In the springtime the woods were carpeted with wild flowers. The girls loved to pick violets and the little white star-shaped flowers.

But the boys, especially Jan, found the Saddle River more to their liking. Under the clear running water, he could see brook trout, carp and large-mouthed bass as they floated lazily on the pebbly bottom.

Then with a frisk of their tails, the fish seemed to tease and say, "Come on, Jan. Try and catch us." Jan blinked his eyes and looked into the water again. Ripples on the surface of the stream told the young fisherman that the fish had disappeared out of sight.

All the year around - in spring, in summer, in fall and in winter - the children went to school. No one had ever heard of long summer vacations such as you enjoy today. The one exciting holiday of the whole year was Christmas Day.

In those far-off times, the early settlers believed that even the smallest child should have his chores to do. Therefore, the whole family shared in the work in the house or on the farm.

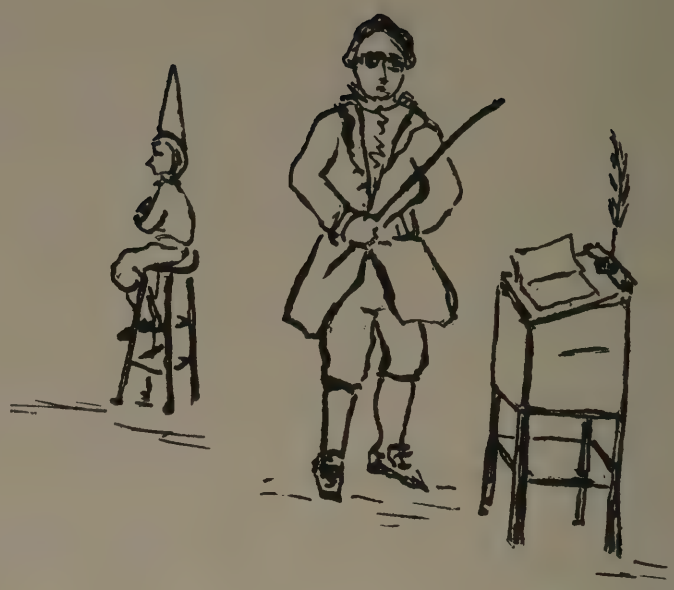
This meant that at berry-picking time, or plowing time, many of the pupils stayed at home because their help was needed for the farm work.

After awhile, the fathers built a one-room schoolhouse on land that belonged to the Peremus Kirk. In those days schools were under the rule of the church. There were no public schools as we have them today.

In the morning, when Yacob and all the others entered the schoolroom, the teacher said "Good morning" to them in

the Dutch language.

Because fall had come, the teacher asked Big Garret to carry some logs of wood into the school. Big Garret went outside and quickly returned with armfuls of wood.



As the fire in the fireplace was burning low, Big Garret put several logs on the fire right away. The rest of the logs he stacked in the corner so that they would be handy later on.

Winter was not far off when a great many logs would be needed to keep the schoolroom warm. Therefore, almost every day the teacher and the big boys sawed and chopped a good supply of wood.

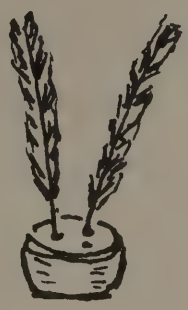
In the morning, after the boys and girls had hung up their jackets, capes, caps and bonnets on the wooden pegs fastened to the wall, they went to their seats.

Their seats were not comfortable desk chairs such as you have in your school today. There were only long wooden benches that were much too high for the smaller children.

Yacob's legs were short so that they dangled in midair and could not touch the floor. Sometimes his legs would go to sleep. Then he just had to wiggle his toes and stretch. He knew this would help to let the prickers out.

But Yacob also knew how a switching from the birch rod – that lay ready on the teacher's desk – could sting and smart. Therefore, he was very careful about wiggling and stretching. He watched and waited until the teacher was busy hearing Wyntie Zaborowski's catechism or Antje's spelling words.

The flickering flames from the log fire did not give enough light for reading or studying. Neither did the windows help much. These were covered with oiled paper instead of glass. Therefore, in cold weather when the windows were closed, most of the pale sunshine was shut out. The room was filled with dark shadows.



Then the teacher carried the brass candlestick to the fireplace and took a twisted taper from the shelf. He held the taper into the flames until the end was burning and so lighted the candle.

In those early days, there were no blackboards on the walls. Instead, a pupil did cyphering – that was arithmetic –

by writing the numbers with a pointed stick in a flat box filled with sand.

There were very few books in the early schools. Often the children learned to read and spell from the church psalm books, the Bible, or the catechism.

Sometimes the teachers made the school books. They used wood to make the covers of the books and protected them with paper or animal skins. Nearly everything the pupils needed in the schools had to be made by hand, just as nearly everything in the homes and farms had to be made by hand. There were no stores or supermarkets in those days.

If you could visit the early school in Paramus, you would be surprised to hear all the pupils reciting together: "a-b-ab; e-b-eb; i-b-ib." in the Dutch language. You would think that was a queer way to learn the letters and to spell.

Did your mother ever tell you to "toe the mark" when she wished you to behave yourself? If so, that saying came from an old school rule. When children were called on to recite, they were supposed to stand with their toes touching a straight line drawn on the floor.

The school days were much longer than they are today.

Along about the middle of the morning, the schoolmaster, and of course the pupils, were very thirsty. Lessons were stopped while one of the big boys picked up the wooden bucket from the corner and went outside to fill it with water from the spring nearby.

Each boy thought it was great fun and a special privilege to pass the water around to his schoolmates. So Jan nearly burst with pride when the teacher called his name. Proudly he filled the gourd dipper with water from the bucket and passed it first to the teacher.

After the teacher had emptied the gourd, any child who wished a drink came up to Jan who filled the dipper again. But, you ask, did everyone drink out of the same dipper? Yes. You see, in those days the people did not know about germs as we do today.

After the children had plenty of water, they went back to their lessons and the time dragged on endlessly. By and by, Yacob and the other children grew hungry. The boy glanced over toward the window and a quick light of joy came into his eyes.

Yacob knew that it was nearly dinner time. How did he know? There wasn't any clock on the wall. Yacob did not need a clock; he could tell the time by watching the

shadow of the sun on the window sill.

This was how the homemade clock worked. On the window sill was a mark or notch that had been cut by the teacher's knife. When the sun's shadow covered the mark or notch, it was noon and dinner time. This homemade clock was like a garden sundial.

Some schoolmasters owned big pocket watches and some had hourglasses on their desks. These hourglasses were another old-fashioned way of telling time. This is how they worked. Each hour was measured by the length of time it took all of the sand to drain out of the upper part of the glass and to drop down through the narrow neck and fall into the bottom part of the hourglass.

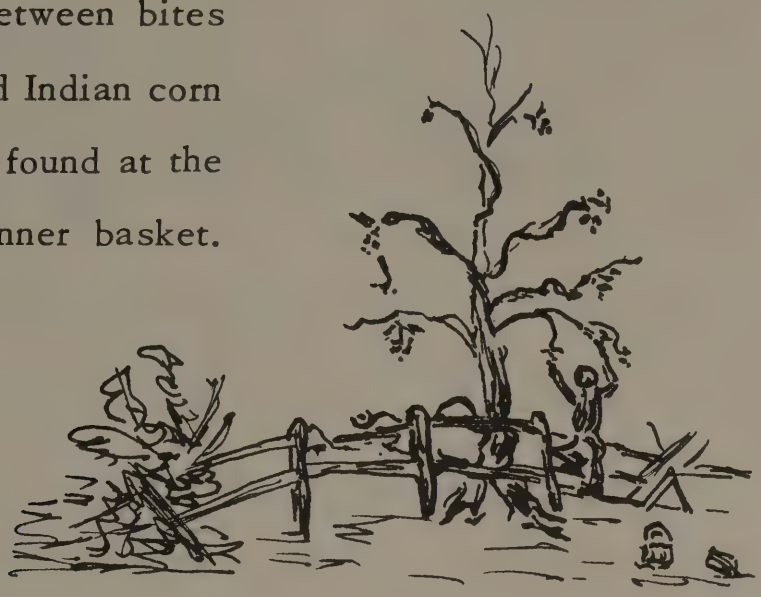
Yacob could not help glancing at the window sill. How hungry he was! In his mind he could see and almost taste the fat turkey leg that his mother had told him she had fixed for his dinner. Perhaps she had also baked an Indian corn cake and sweetened it with wild honey.

Yacob sat up with a start. The schoolmaster glanced at the mark on the window sill and then stood up and raised his hand. Dinner time had come! The children walked to the pegs, took down the lunch baskets, and went quietly out

of the schoolhouse. Then they scampered in all directions shouting with joy.

With a whoop, Yacob turned and ran as fast as his short legs could carry him to the edge of the woods at the rear of the school. He scampered to the top of the stone wall, reached up and pulled the maple branch down so that the tangled grapevine came down too. Tearing off a bunch of plump purple grapes, he slid down from the wall and called to his playmates, "The grapes are ripe, the grapes are ripe!"

As his friends came running, Yacob settled himself down against the wall and happily stuffed the sweet grapes into his mouth between bites of turkey meat and Indian corn cake that he had found at the bottom of his dinner basket.



JOHANNES AND THE ARROWMAKER

The Indian's stone hammer sent chips flying from the piece of flint. He worked quickly because the daylight was almost gone. Again he brought down the hammer and more chips flew.

The Indian was shaping an arrowhead. Tomorrow he would shape the point with the bone tool that had been made from the tip of a deer antler.

As the Indian worked, he thought about his youngest son who was now old enough to hunt with his brothers. So he was shaping the arrowhead as a special present for the boy.

Suddenly the Indian stopped his work. He did not move

a muscle. He was like a statue of himself. Then slowly he bent down and put his ear to the ground.

Someone was walking heavily in the forest, breaking sticks and rustling the dry oak leaves. By the sounds, the Indian knew that a white man was coming, someone who did not try to keep his travels a secret.

Instinctively the Indian darted behind a giant chestnut tree to wait. The footsteps came nearer and nearer. Then through the trees, a white man walked down the trail.

Instantly the Indian recognized the white man. He came out of hiding and raised his hand in friendly salute.

The white man was Johannes Arie Ackerman, who had bought from the Lenni Lenape Indians acres of land in Paramus Valley along the Saddle River. Now he was ready to build his new home for his young wife, Jacomyntje Ryerson, and their son, Arie.

The two men walked to the Indian encampment under the tall pine trees on the knoll beside the Saddle River.

Even though Johannes lived in the seventeen hundreds, about two hundred years ago, members of the Ackerman family still talk about him. The Ackermans tell how Johannes lived with the Indians while they and the white settlers

helped him build his sandstone house; how they helped put on the thatched roof and made it snug and tight with straw.

When at last the house was finished, Johannes and his wife and son, Arie, moved in.

The first spring was a very busy time for the new homemakers. Trees had to be cut down. Stones had to be gathered from the grounds and piled up into fences. Then the cleared fields were planted with corn, wheat, rye and oats.

Near the house Johannes planted a vegetable garden. Herbs were planted later. Jacomyntje used certain ones for seasoning in her cooking. Other herbs she used for home-made medicines.

Johannes built barns for the oxen and a shed for the cow and her calf. The pigs had to have a pen and the sheep a warm place to sleep. The chickens and ducks, too, had to have coops before the cold weather came.

All the family gave careful attention to the valuable animals and barnyard stock that had been brought by Johannes from his father's farm in Hackensack.

The first summer on the new bowerie (the Dutch word for farm) passed quickly. Early fall came. Jacomyntje re-

membered the heap of tulip, crocus and hyacinth bulbs she had stored away in the great Dutch kas, or cupboard. Now was the time to plant them.

Jacomyntje went into the kitchen, pulled out the flower bulbs from the back of the deep cupboard, and called, "Arie!"

The mother and the boy went outside. She dug hole after hole in the sweet-smelling ground and little Arie dropped in the brown bulbs. Then he and his mother covered them with warm earth.

As they worked, Jacomyntje told Arie how tall and beautiful the red and yellow tulips would be next spring. She told him how sweet the hyacinths would smell. She told him that the crocuses would look like pieces of gold around their doorstep.

Little Arie learned to love the flowers that were hidden inside of the funny brown bulbs that looked like onions.

His mother told him that all Dutch people loved flowers and that the first settlers had brought the bulbs with them in the sailing vessels from Holland.

She explained how his great-grandfather, David Ackerman, and his great-grandmother, Lysbeth de Villiers, had

come to America on the sailing ship, *D'Vos*. This ship, she said, had also brought Albert Zaborowski from Holland in 1662. The Ackerman family had first settled in New Amsterdam and then had crossed the Hudson River as the Zaborowskis had. The Ackermans built a brownstone house in the settlement of Hackensack and on the east wall of this house, Jacomyntje told Arie, his ancestors had cut into the stones their initials and the date, 1704.

After the boy and his mother had finished planting the bulbs, they looked across the fields where Johannes was cutting the ripe grain. This was the time of harvest, when the grain was stored in the barns so that the cattle would have plenty to eat during the long winter ahead. Johannes dried corn, deer meat and bear meat, and fish, just as the Indians had taught his ancestors, the first settlers.

Several of the hogs were butchered by Johannes with the help of his neighbors. The meat was cut into sides of bacon and hams and then he and his wife made headcheese and sausages or wurst, as the Dutch people called them.

Johannes took sacks of wheat and rye grain to the mill. There other men had gathered, and they talked while waiting for the flour to be ground.

When her husband arrived home, Jacomyntje was happy

because she had plenty of flour to bake brodt (bread), kookys (cookies), oeley-kooks (doughnuts) and other goodies for her family.

Finally the day came when the harvest work was done. Johannes and his wife and boy were very thankful that they had enough food to last them all winter.

One day the Ackermans gave a fine feast and invited many of their relatives and friends from up and down the Valley. Some of them were named Blauvelt, Hopper, Zaborowski, Bogert and Demarest.

Uncle Casper Tuning Up

The long table in the kitchen was laden with roast wild turkeys, rabbit stew and wild pigeon pie. There were mounds of red cranberries that had grown in the marshland nearby. There were golden squash, pumpkins and bright-cheeked apples to be eaten with rich cheeses. While the big boys cracked chestnuts, walnuts, hickory nuts and butternuts the girls and younger boys shelled them.

The grownups drank the richly spiced cider that Johannes ladled into cups from the big kettle hanging from

the iron crane in the great fireplace. The children munched comfaits (sugar plums) or almond cakes and marchpans (a sweet shaped like miniature fruit).

After everyone had eaten as much as possible, the babies were all put to sleep on the huge feather bed. Meanwhile, the old folks dozed or gossiped on the long benches by the chimney corners.

Then Uncle Casper got out his fiddle and played all the tunes he knew and the rest danced and danced and danced until it was time for everyone to go home.

Today, although two hundred years have passed since Johannes, his wife and Arie lived along Saddle River, the same river ripples on the bank of the property that Johannes bought from the Indians. But the house that Johannes built is no longer there.

Once a big white Victorian house stood on the property, in it lived — Johannes' great-great-granddaughter — Hazel Ackerman Lampe and her family.

In the kitchen was a fireplace with a hand-carved wooden mantel that had been in Johannes' first home and was saved before the house was torn down.

From the window in the kitchen, Mr. and Mrs. Lampe,

their daughter, Jean, and son, Jim, could look out across the fields to the grove of trees where Johannes met the arrow-maker and lived with his Indian friends so many years ago.

THE HESSIAN BULLET

Jane and John Zaborowski were studying their catechism for tomorrow's lessons when they heard the thump-thump of marching feet. Soldiers were coming up Paramus Road. The boy and his sister ran to the window to see whether the men were Americans or the enemy.

Immediately the children dropped to the floor, below the window. "Some of the men are wearing red coats. They are British," whispered Jane, "and with them are Hessians. Those are the German soldiers that the British have hired to fight our men," the girl explained hurriedly to her young brother.

Soon the thump-thump of the marching feet passed the house and grew fainter and fainter, finally stopping altogether. The children thought they heard a shot, but all seemed quiet and safe once more. The boy and girl sighed with relief.

Jane and John Zaborowski, the Ackermans, Bogerts, Hoppers and all the neighboring families had become accustomed to the sound of marching feet. This was the troubled time of the American Revolutionary War.

General George Washington, commander of the American Continental Army, was a familiar person to the people of this area. Tradition says that he attended a service in the Paramus Church. Near the church, both the American and the British had camped, and fighting had taken place close by.

The quiet forest trails along the Saddle River, the Hackensack, the Passaic and the Ramapo Rivers, had suddenly become busy military highways. Sometimes the soldiers of both armies, when on the march toward northern New Jersey, West Point and Upper New York State, stopped at the farmers' houses and asked for food.

The farmers gave what they could, but sometimes the soldiers of both armies were not satisfied, and they stole chickens and cattle and grain. Therefore, the farmers tried

to hide their food and animals, especially from the enemy.

In those troubled days, the people kept their children close beside them in their brown sandstone houses. John hated to be kept in the house with the women folk. How he longed to run out to the barn and pet his precious mare, Janete. How he missed the gallops on the mare's back over the fields and through woods of his father's farm. Then he thought how much he and his sister missed the ice skating races once held on the Saddle River in the winter time. Oh! those happy carefree days before the war!

Suddenly, shrieks were heard outside the house and the kitchen door burst open, throwing a very badly frightened colored man almost to the floor. The family gathered around him in amazement. It was Ben, the stable man. What had happened to him? His eyes rolled wildly and his hair, usually kinky as sheep's wool, seemed to stand up on end!

Somehow, the frightened man was lifted onto the big settle beside the open fireplace to rest, while Jane ran to fetch a warm drink. After awhile, Ben Bennet told the Zaborowskis what had frightened him so badly.

When the soldiers marched up the road a little while ago, Ben said that he had been resting outside the doorway of the barn in the sun. He had finished cleaning out the horses' stalls. Behind him, swinging on the lower half of the barn door, were three of his happy little children. They all talked and sang together.

Then the thud-thud of marching feet was heard and the enemy soldiers came in sight. Suddenly they were near the house and before Ben could run into the barn or the children drop down behind the half door, a Hessian in the ranks of marching men turned toward the open doorway. Without warning he lifted his rifle to his shoulder and fired a shot.

"Praise de Lawd," Ben blubbered, "dat Hessian was a very bad shot." By a miracle the bullet went wild and zoomed over the heads of the three children. "Zing!" went the bullet through the open doorway and up to the roof of the barn, where it lodged deep in one of the hand-hewn beams. Ben was breathless as he finished.

"But the children, the children," cried the family all together.

"Dey is safe," Ben hurriedly reassured them. Then he hastened to add that as soon as the soldiers had disappeared, the children had run shrieking down Dunker Hook Road, and "to dey home and dey mammy."

This story of the Hessian bullet really happened during the Revolutionary War and ever since, it has been handed down from one generation to another in the Zaborowski-Wessells-Board family.

Some members of the family believe that the stable man was alone that day when the soldiers marched by; others think that only the three children were in the barn. Whichever way it happened, Jane and John had a very exciting story to tell to their own children when they grew up.

The brown sandstone house, where Jane and John once lived, stood for nearly two hundred years afterward, and then burned down. But the barn, where the family horses and John's pet mare were stabled, still stands on the Paramus Road.

Today, instead of being used as a barn, the building is the Saddle River Golf Clubhouse. Opposite the clubhouse is

the same winding road, still called Dunker Hook Road which meant Dark Corner.

Also today on the road are three houses where once Ben Bennet and the other slaves belonging to the Zaborowskis lived in those far-off days when marching feet were heard up and down the valley.

Dunker Hook Road

HOT BREAD AND BUTTER

Lela Vanderbeck peered into the deep Dutch oven. The bread was done and ummh — it smelled delicious. Lela carefully lifted the loaves out of the oven with the long-handled shovel. Expertly she balanced the bread as she walked across the kitchen, and then one by one she slid the loaves off onto the smooth wooden table.

"Now," she said to herself, "they're done just to a turn. Crusty, like my Paul wants. Wonder if Captain Outwater will let my Paul come home tonight from camp down near the Peremus Kirk."

Lela hummed a little Dutch song to herself as she left the table and went back to her butter-making. Soon the butter was done. How yellow and rich it is, thought Lela, as she poured fresh cold water on the butter and then pressed out the last drop with the back of a wooden paddle. Lela could not help tasting some of the golden lump, scooping out a bit on the tip of her little finger.

Lela Vanderbeck straightened up and suddenly stood still and listened. Someone was running up the path and up the stone steps outside the kitchen door.

"Lela, Lela," called a voice. "Enemy soldiers are coming up from Hackensack and they are looking for food. Hide what you can, Woman."

The voice of a well-known neighbor died away as he ran down the steps and turned toward another house farther on.

Lela ran here and there hiding all the food she could — in the clothes press, the cupboards, up in the loft above the kitchen and in the cellar underground.

She ran outside and grabbed three or four ducks by their wings and half-carried and half-chased them down the outside cellar way. Bang! She let the cellar door fall shut.

Marching feet, British and Hessian, came up the road. Some of the men ran to the pigpen at the back of the house. They stuffed the squealing little pigs into bags and ran away with them. Some of the men caught chickens and geese that were down near the barn.

Other enemy soldiers came to the house. They searched the closets and presses, tumbling everything out on the floor. They grabbed the fresh hot bread and stuffed the loaves into their knapsacks. On top of the bread they stuffed the newly-churned butter, which Lela had formed into neat round mounds and put into the spring house to harden.

Then just as the men were leaving, a strange noise seemed to come from under the kitchen floor beneath their feet. "Quack, quack."

"Oh, those stupid ducks!" moaned poor Lela to herself.

"Out of the way, Woman," shouted the men as they pushed Lela into the corner. Down they dashed into the cellar. There was a great commotion and the men soon came up holding the quacking ducks by their legs. "Thump-thump" went their heavy boots as the men tramped down the road.

"All that good food gone to the enemy," whispered Lela and she sat down on the ladderback chair by the door and cried.

Then something made her get up and go over to the door. She opened the upper part of the Dutch door so that she could see the soldiers' backs disappearing down the road.

What had happened to their bright red coats? Lela wiped her eyes and looked again. Then she knew. Her tears stopped. She began to laugh and laugh.

"Ho, ho! my hot bread has melted my beautiful butter! Their red uniforms are all streaked with grease and have turned a dirty brown color. Now they are punished for stealing my Paul's fresh bread and butter."

Lela chuckled as she turned away. Then she opened the doors of the great Dutch kas and felt behind her best linen sheets. There was one loaf of bread left.

She ran down to the springhouse, and sure enough, a crock of cream was hidden in the corner. What luck! She could churn some more butter for her soldier husband.

LELA VANDERBECK CHURNING BUTTER *Spoon Rack* *Dutch Kas* *Dough Trough* *Wool Reel*

Lela somehow felt sure that Captain Outwater would let Paul come home tonight. As she worked at her churn, Lela

sang her churning song over and over again until the lumps of golden butter came.

"Hayaw, za yaw zauches
De buitter lope deure de hrawnches,
Hae yaw chee, hae yawchee.

Buitterchee, buitterchee come,
Alican laidlechee tubichee vull."

THE MASKED BALL

Aaron Burr on Raft at Wolfert's Roost

"Listen!" whispered John Bartow Prevost to his brother, Augustine James Frederick Prevost. The boys, although not yet fifteen years of age, were ensigns in the British Army.

In Revolutionary War days, ensigns were standard-bearers in the British infantry. Therefore, the lads were much away from home and a good night's sleep in their comfortable feather bed was, indeed, a rare treat.

Now, although John and Augustine were the brothers' given names, they were always known as Bartow and Frederick.

"Listen!" repeated Bartow. He pulled aside the heavy chintz curtains that had been drawn closely around the high post bed. The tap-tap of dancing feet and the notes of a violin and bass viol drifted into the windows from the drawing room below.

Frederick lay listening to the music. Suddenly he turned over on his side and faced his brother.

"Bartow, whom do you suppose Dear Mama is giving the masked ball for tonight? The American officers or the British?"

"Oh, I say, it must be for the British," Bartow reasoned. "Our soldiers were scattered over all Paramus when we went to sleep a few hours ago. Surely we would have been roused from bed if the American Rebels had routed our camp. Wouldn't we?" anxiously inquired the very young soldier. But his question was unanswered.

Frederick sat up in bed. "Oh, I say, Bartow, now I am sure that they are playing a gay English tune. They are King George's soldiers and so are we. I, for one, shall dress and go down to the party."

"Right you are, Frederick." The brothers slid out from behind the curtains from opposite sides of the bed. They

pulled their long night shirts over their heads and quickly buttoned on their breeches and military coats.

Meanwhile, the boys' three sisters, Sally, Anne Louisa and Mary Louisa, were also awake in the room across the hall.

The old brownstone house where the Prevosts lived was crowded with overnight guests, so the girls were put into one room. Sally and Anne Louisa were given the great maple post bed. The low trundle bed was pulled out from under the big bed for Mary Louisa.

The sisters were very excited, but not with happiness. They seemed a little sad and a good deal puzzled. Once in a while, Sally wiped her eyes with the edge of the linen sheet.

"Do you think," asked Anne Louisa in a trembling voice, "do you think Dear Mama will marry Colonel Aaron Burr and then he will be our new papa? Or does she favor a British officer?"

"I can scarce believe our own Dear Papa is dead 'way off in the West Indies. But Dear Mama needs someone to look after her, besides our Grandmama DeVisme. Bartow and Frederick are away from home so very much with the Army," said wise Sally.

"I heard Grandmama say that Dear Mama was not a beauty, but that she was so wasinating," Mary Louisa added.

"Not 'wascinating', you little goose, but 'fascinating.' That means all the gentlemen fancy you, and you have many, many beaux." This was wise Sally talking again.

The two boys, the three girls, their mother, whose name was Theodosia, and Grandmama, all lived in the fine old stone house together. It was built on a hill in Paramus and the gardens and farmlands covered many acres. The place was called "The Hermitage."

Following the custom of wealthy families in those days, the Prevosts had both men and women slaves. Some of them did the work inside the house, while others attended to the gardens, the fields and the stables.

Before the Revolutionary War, the children had led

happy, but ordered lives. Lessons were heard regularly each morning by the Schoolmaster. He lived for months at a time in the Hermitage.

In the afternoons, after Latin, French, arithmetic and writing were done, the children learned the art of dancing.

The girls were also obliged to curtsy and the boys to bow properly when they greeted their Grandmama and Dear Mama's guests.

Small Mary Louisa hated the hours she must spend at her embroidery. Her sisters, however, stitched away happily, their tongues merrily wagging.

But now in War days, lessons were interrupted, and Dear Mama was always busy. There were no more rides on their favorite horses down the hill on the old Post Road to Hopper's Town.

The girls missed their frequent visits to the grist mill that stood behind the Hermitage at the edge of the rushing Hohokus Brook. Nor could they walk into the beautiful ravine, where the air was always deliciously cool even on the hottest summer day, and the water sparkled on the stone ledges, down between the steep moss-covered walls.

All the hills in the Valley and the Albany Post Road,

beyond the gates of the Hermitage, seemed to swarm with soldiers.

Well might the minds of the children and their lives be confused. Indeed, confusion covered the whole countryside. Some neighboring families were Tories. They were loyal to King George.

But more and more of the settlers in Paramus had joined in the cause for a new America and freedom. The Schoolmaster, and Mama also, tried to explain why people were willing to fight for freedom, that same freedom so precious to the first settlers, who had left their homes in the old countries across the Atlantic Ocean.

Sometimes, Sally and Anne Louisa wondered why their brothers were in the King's Army. But, they remembered, their own Papa had been British.

Now, however, Dear Mama seemed to favor the American officer, Colonel Aaron Burr. Indeed, he was very handsome and very courageous. Everyone in the Hermitage, and all in Hopper's Town, were most thankful for his protection.

Never would the girls forget the fear and excitement in the early days of the War. The Schoolmaster had returned from Hopper's tavern in the settlement with word that the British were on their way from Hackensack.

"They are after food and cattle," the Schoolmaster reported. "No farm will be safe," he predicted.

But the fears had been for nought. Colonel Aaron Burr and his troops had come down from Ramapo and all had been saved.

As soon as all was quiet again, the Schoolmaster, ever a curious man, went down the hill again to Hopper's Town to have the full report on the skirmish.

Shortly, he returned to the Hermitage and everyone gathered around to hear the news. The British had not taken any supplies; Zaborowski's tavern had been burned, however.

"But wait, hark to this," the Schoolmaster raised his hand. "A wounded American officer lay abed in the tavern, when word came that the British were coming. He was far

too ill to walk," continued the Schoolmaster, "but he was saved. How, you ask? 'Tis remarkable in truth. Three young ladies, smart of wit and strong of arm, laid the poor young man in a thick feather bed. Together they carried him across the Hohokus Brook and so to safety."

The little Schoolmaster clasped his hands and murmured, "Oh, the wonder of womanhood!"

Since the skirmish of Hopper's Town, two more years of the war had passed. The Americans were very much discouraged. But in 1778 a victory for the tired Continental Army came when the Battle of Monmouth was won, down near the Jersey shore.

Again excitement ran high in Paramus. General Washington and his troops were seen on the Albany Post Road and they rested under the great elm tree in Hopper's Town. Then the General went to the Hermitage.

The days and nights that followed would never be forgotten. The very walls of the old house rang with laughter, gay music and dancing. Indeed, Sally and her sisters thought George Washington quite the finest gentleman in all America.

After the short rest of only a few days and nights in Paramus, the General left for Haverstraw. Later, word came

to the Hermitage that he had gone north to inspect the fortifications at West Point.

"But tonight," said Sally, very much puzzled, as her thoughts returned to her mother and Colonel Burr, "the British are at a masked ball in our drawing room."

The older sisters lay still, thinking. In the distance, the music sounded pleasantly. Mary Louisa fell asleep on the trundle bed.

Gradually, the two girls became aware of something beside the music — a curious, sharp, clanking sound that seemed to come from the garden.

Sally and Anne Louisa stole quietly from the great bed and tiptoed across the room. Moonlight flooded the sleeping winter rose garden. The crisp night air was spicy with the smell of the ancient boxwood hedge.

Instantly, as though drawn by a magnet, the eyes of the two girls were focused on the open space below the window.

There, two men were fighting a duel. Swift as lightning a sword flashed in the hand of a man dressed in a black cape. The other man dropped to the ground, wounded. He wore a British uniform.

Sally and Anne Louisa clutched each other tightly. They

could scarcely breathe. Then their attention was caught by the sight of a lady coming from the house. She wore a beautiful gown, her hair covered by a lace shawl and her eyes hidden behind a black mask. Another British officer, also masked, followed closely behind.

The man in the black cape turned and the strong moonlight showed that he was Colonel Aaron Burr! The lady lowered her mask. She was their Dear Mama!

"Oh!" breathed the two girls at the window. "Will Colonel Burr be taken prisoner?" sharply whispered Sally. But Anne Louisa only sobbed softly in terror. How the girls wished they could hear what was being said down there in the garden!

Quite suddenly the fears and tears were turned to relief. The British officer helped the wounded man into the house. Colonel Burr and Mama were alone.

The eyes of the two sisters followed the man in the black cape and Madame Prevost as they walked slowly toward the garden gate. Colonel Burr raised Madame's hand to his lips and then they stood with their arms around each other.

Sally and Anne Louisa looked and solemnly nodded.

"Now I am sure that the American officer will be our new papa," whispered Anne Louisa.

The sisters tip-toed across the room and climbed onto the high bed.

"How shall we ever go to sleep?" excitedly sighed Sally as she straightened her muslin night cap.

"Let us both wish very hard that Dear Mama will come and kiss us. If we wish hard enough, I am sure she will." No sooner had Anne Louisa spoken, than the door opened softly and Madame Prevost entered. The lighted candle in her hand showed a happy smile on her face.

"Oh, my dears, I hoped you were awake. No, not Mary Louisa, she is so small."

Quickly she crossed the room and set the brass candlestick on the bedside stand. Madame Prevost sat on the edge of the bed and gathered the two girls in her arms.

"Oh, Mama, Mama, we know," Anne Louisa whispered in her ear. "Colonel Burr is to be our new papa. We saw from the window."

"But," questioned Sally, "is not Colonel Burr with his troops in White Plains at this time? Is that not on the east side of the wide Hudson River?"

"True, my darling," answered her mother. "But, whist while I tell you the wonder of the man, his boldness, his determination to have my promise to wed before he rode away this very night. He cared not whether the enemy were here or not." Madame Prevost's eyes shone with love and pride.

"Lie down and cover up, my dears. I shall tell you the story of Colonel Burr's adventurous ride from his camp to the Hermitage."

The girls settled themselves under the covers.

"After sundown this very night," began their mother, "Colonel Burr left his command at White Plains and rode to the ancient house called Wolfert's Roost. There at the

edge of the Hudson River, a flat-bottomed boat waited. The oars were manned by six of the Colonel's trusted troopers. Quickly, he led his noble horse aboard. By a simple order from his master, the horse lay down on a monstrous quantity of woolen blankets and buffalo rugs."

"Why?" asked Anne Louisa.

"Horses are valued highly in war time," answered her mother. "The soft bed kept the Colonel's favorite horse from harm. His legs were tethered together, so that he could not bruise himself.

"All was in readiness. The men pushed the boat out from shore and the voyage over the dark stretch of river began. How endless it must have seemed. But at last, without mishap, the boat grated on the pebbles of the opposite shore."

"Oh," breathed the two girls in relief.

"Immediately, the brave horse was released," continued Madame Prevost. "The Colonel sprang into his saddle. Off they dashed into the darkness."

"But miles and miles lie between the Hudson River shore and the Hermitage," said Anne Louisa.

"Yes, indeed — at least fifteen, or twenty miles, per-

haps. And whether it be swamp land or forest and held by the enemy, none could hold my bold lover from me," proudly said Madame Prevost.

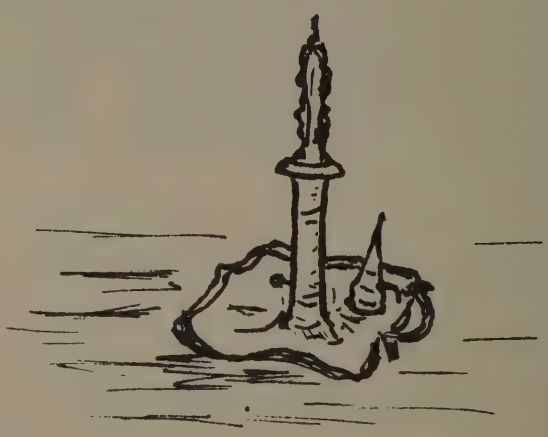
"But now he is traveling that same dangerous way back again across the Hudson to White Plains, is he not?" asked Sally with a quiver in her voice.

"Yes, my dear child, he is. But the boat was well hidden, I am sure, and the men well rested under the warm buffalo rugs. I am confident that all is in God's hands. I know he will rejoin his command at White Plains in time to review his troops at sun-up. So sleep assured, my dears."

As Madame kissed her two daughters, Anne Louisa caught at her mother's hand. "Do our brothers know? Will they accept Colonel Burr as their papa, too?"

"Bartow and Frederick know all, dear Anne Louisa. Your brothers hold Colonel Burr in high regard just as you do. Now to your beauty sleeps, my dears."

Madame Prevost picked up the candlestick and went to her own bedroom.



The masked ball was over and quietness settled over the old house.

BETSY'S RIDE

Clickety click, clickety click, went the wooden knitting needles in Betsy Suffern's busy fingers.

The eight-year-old girl sat bolt upright on the high ladderback chair. Her feet could not reach the floor, so to balance herself, Betsy hooked the toes of her slippers under the chair rungs.

Suddenly Betsy sighed, laid her work down on the window sill, and getting up from her chair, she stretched her arms high above her head. Knitting stockings for her family was Betsy's stint every day, and tiresome work she thought it.

The stockings on the wide window sill were for her brother, Andrew. "Bless me," said Betsy to herself as she sat down again. "Surely this stocking leg has not grown an inch since last time I measured."

Betsy stretched the stocking flat on her lap and measured its length with the first joint of her thumb. You see, the thumb joint is supposed to be an inch long, and is often used when a tape measure isn't handy.

"Oh, I must work faster. Andrew needs this pair before winter comes," and Betsy's fingers set the needles to clicking again.

"Betsy! Betsy!" called her mother as she entered the room. "Betsy, child, your father wishes you to ride to our cousin's in the settlement over the mountain."

Mrs. Suffern closed the door and took her daughter's small, strong hands in hers.

"You understand, child? There is danger on the roads, and the way is far for a girl of your age. But of course you know that your father's forge was destroyed when the enemy burned so many other buildings. Your father is building a new barn and he needs iron things and nails. Will you ride to our cousin's and ask him to help us?"

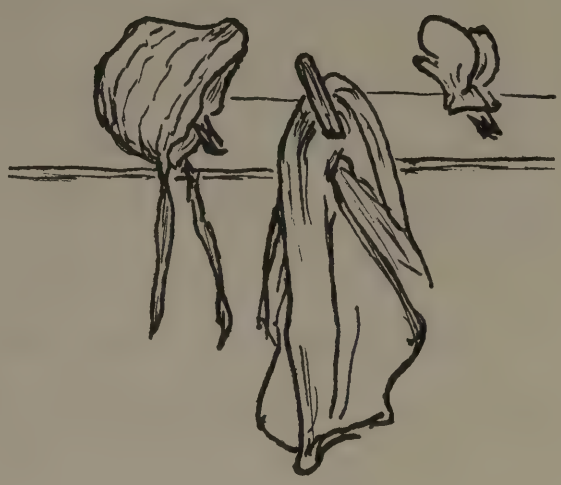
Betsy nodded, and her serious blue eyes looked into her mother's as she answered, "I understand. My brother cannot go because he is a patriot, and the Tories are hunting patriots who are against the King and want freedom. I am ready to go."

"We knew you would go. Your father has sent Ben to saddle Molly. She is your own horse, swift, sure-footed and

trustworthy, as you know well. Kate is packing a bite for you both to eat. Kate will ride with you."

Without another word, Betsy went to her room. Quickly she put on her warmest woolen dress and heavy knitted stockings. Then she took down her red cape and hood from the wooden peg behind the door.

Farewells to her father, mother, brother and sisters were quickly said. The horses were put to a swift trot down the lane, on through Ramapough Pass, between the mountains that led to the forest trail.



The winter sun was almost shut out by the dark green roof of overlapping hemlock branches. The wind made strange noises, and the horses danced skittishly as the brown oak leaves swirled around their feet.

Betsy and her Negro companion knew that deserters from the army, bandits and spies roamed the forest. They must reach the settlement before dark. Therefore, the two riders watched the trail every minute. Constantly they kept their horses at a swift pace by whispered commands and sharp

touches of their whips.

How long it took Betsy and Kate to reach the settlement, nobody knows, but finally the weary miles came to an end. Slipping down from Molly's back, Betsy ran to her cousin and was warmly greeted. Then the girl explained her visit to her astonished relative.

"Upon my honor, I shall help your father and my kinsman. But you must be hungry and weary, child. Come, we shall talk more on the morrow," her cousin reassured Betsy heartily.

The horses were led away to shelter by the stable boy, and Betsy and her maid, Kate, were given food. The travelers were very tired and soon went to bed. Betsy slept soundly in the deep feather bed under a layer of warm quilts.

The next morning, as Betsy and Kate were preparing to leave, a message arrived from General Washington. He requested the girl to ride on to Morristown and report to him.

Betsy was delighted. She knew George Washington well. Often, the General had used her father's house as headquarters. But the child was surprised that General Washington knew she was at her cousin's and so part way to his winter headquarters at Morristown.

The distance between the settlement and Morristown was covered quickly.

Imagine Betsy's surprise, after she dismounted and was greeted by the General, to hear him ask, "Can you carry a message safely back to your father?"

"Yes, sir. I could put it between my foot and my stocking," replied Betsy without hesitation.

"You would not be afraid, Mistress Betsy?"

"No, sir," answered his young messenger. And lifting her riding skirt, Betsy made a pretty curtsy. Pleased by the manners of the girl, General Washington gallantly lifted her hand to his lips, just as he would have done if she had been a grown-up young lady.

After a bounteous supper and a good night's rest, Betsy and Kate headed their horses toward home.

The days and nights were cold, and the trails through the forest from Morristown to the Suffern home seemed to stretch out endlessly.

The message in her shoe was a great secret. Even Kate did not know about it. Betsy was very proud to be a dispatch rider, yet she was a little afraid, too.

Betsy's Ride

It seemed to the girl that people in the settlements they passed through must know about the important message to her father that was hidden in her stocking. But, of course, no one really did know.

At last, the valley road along the Ramapo River was familiar, and soon the riders neared Hopper's tavern.

All at once, enemy Redcoats sprang from behind trees and blocked the road. Two men grabbed the horses' bridles.

"Stop, in the name of the King! What is your business? Where are you going?" all the men shouted at the same time.

"Home," answered Betsy innocently, but she was really very much afraid. "I have been to see my cousin over the mountain."

"Ho-ho! A likely story," said one tall Hessian soldier, and he laughed out loud.

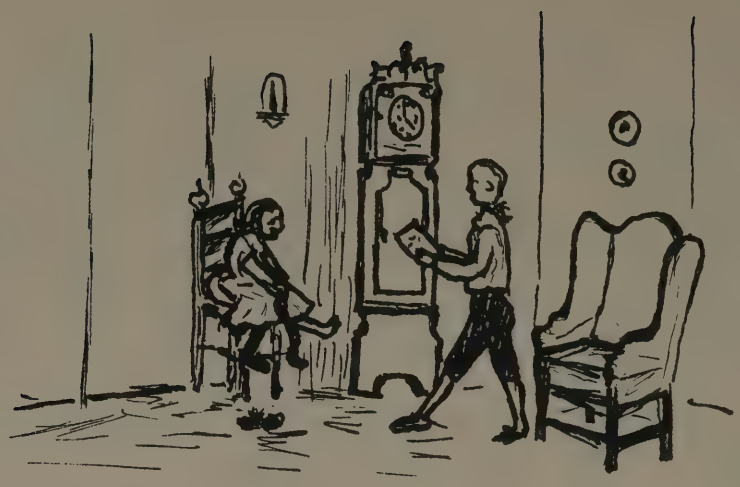
"Shall we search her?" demanded another rough-looking man.

"No, she is only a little 'kind' - a weak girl child - let her go home." The second voice was not as gruff as the others.

No sooner had the man let go of the bridles, than Betsy jerked the reins and gave Molly a smart cut with her whip. Molly reared up on her hind legs at the rough treatment from her kind mistress and then lunged forward like a streak of lightning. Right behind her raced Kate.

On and on they galloped through the forest until at last they came in sight of the encampment at Ramapough Pass. The two riders reined in their plunging horses. Softly, they whispered into the twitching furry ears and gently patted their horses' necks and heads until they were not excited any more.

When Betsy reached home, she astonished her family by immediately sitting down and taking off one shoe and stocking. Solemnly, she handed the dispatch message to her father.



The girl sighed with relief. She had carried out the General's orders, just as a real soldier dispatch rider would have done.

How disappointing that so much about Betsy's story as it has been told by generation after generation in the Suffern family has been lost forever.

How disappointing that the story does not tell us what John Suffern said to his little daughter! But we are sure he must have been very proud of his brave Betsy.

And today, everyone who reads about Betsy calls her a brave American patriot, even though she was only eight years old when she was a secret dispatch rider for General Washington.

INDIAN COUNTRY

Two brothers, Abraham and David Godwin, lived in a small house that stood on the banks of the swift Passaic River. Nearby, a giant waterfall tumbled over enormous rocks and spilled into a deep chasm far below.

Only a short time before, the boys and their family had lived in New York City.

Their father, Abraham Godwin, had worked as a master carpenter and builder for Mr. Dey, whose business was at Dey Street and Broadway in the city.

But Mr. Godwin wished to leave the city and start a new settlement in the wilderness of New Jersey. Therefore, he crossed the Hudson River and visited the Indian chiefs in the new country.

When he found that the Indians were very friendly, Mr. Godwin moved his wife, Phoebe Cole Godwin, and their children into the Indian country.

Totowa or Tetauwi, as some people spelled it, was the name of the Indian village where the Godwins built their new home. Totowa in the Indian language meant "It is between"

and described the land between the Watchung Mountains and the swift Passaic River.

Very soon after the Godwins were settled, Mr. Godwin persuaded friends to leave New York City also and build new homes in the Indian country. They were the Van Houtens, the Van Blarcoms, and the Van Gersens.

Moving in those days was very different from moving today. There were no planes, no trains, no moving vans no automobiles. Traveling was done either by boat, oxcart, horseback or by shank's mare. That last means, walking on your own two feet.

But somehow the families moved all their belongings to the Indian country. That settlement started by Mr. Godwin was the beginning of the great city of Paterson.

Ever since Abraham and David could toddle around the comfortable, warm Godwin kitchen on their short fat legs, dark-skinned Indian braves were welcomed guests.

Often the chiefs brought presents to their white friends and then the Godwins would have great feasts. Pieces of venison, young bear meat, and wild turkey were roasted over the logs in the great fireplace. Everyone was happy.

Sometimes the little boys went to see their Indian friends. They played with the papooses and Indian children

in the wickams up on the hill. Sometimes they played ball games out in the warm sunshine.

When evening came, Abraham and David were taken home. Almost always, they brought many gifts from their Indian friends.

Once a lucky Godwin child was given a little doll papoose dressed just like a real Indian with wampum ornaments and brightly-colored porcupine quills.

At this time, when Abraham and David were young, their father was in the iron business. Often he had to go to New York City across the Hudson River.

Sometimes he traveled to Sterling iron mines up in Sloatsburg and sometimes he went to the mines at Ringwood.

Whenever this happened, the boys were very much excited, because they knew that the good Chief Mashua would come down from his home on the hill and stay with their mother and their sisters and brother until their father came home again.

When Chief Mashua stayed at the Godwin house, Abraham and David could hardly wait until evening came and the family gathered in the big kitchen.

Impatiently they watched their mother cook dinner in the

great iron kettle that hung from the crane in the fireplace. Everyone was hungry.

Everyone watched eagerly as Mrs. Godwin ladled out an extra-large bowl of steaming bear meat stew. That was for the guest, Chief Mashua. Then more stew was ladled out for the three girls, then the boys, and at last one for the mother.

When the evening meal was over, darkness came. The giant forest trees looked very tall and strange to young Abraham as he pulled the solid wooden shutters together and bolted them for the night.

The soup bowls and the drinking mugs were washed and put away in the cupboard. The hearth was brushed clean by Big Sister, and the family settled down in their favorite places in front of the log fire.

Abraham and David sat on their little stools close to Chief Mashua. They sighed with contentment and excitement. Story time had come, and Mashua had promised to tell them about the Great Falls again.

"Always, day and night, the great waterfall speaks to me in the voice of the Great Spirit," said Mashua in his deep voice that sounded like the waterfall to the listening children.

"Many times when the thunder drums beat in the full black clouds in the sky over my head, and the fierce Fire God sends his burning arrows across the heavens, I have gone for safety down into the chasm at the foot of the Great Falls."

"But when the sun comes again, the Great Spirit smiles and all is well." Mashua stood up.

"Some day you will be big enough, my little friends, to go down the steep steps in the rocks, down to the cool shelter at the very bottom of the falls."

"Then you will look up above your heads and hear the mighty roar of the Great Waterfall God as he sweeps down the

rocks beside you. Then you, too, with your Indian friends, will feel the anger of the Great Spirit in the thunder and lightning storms."

Mashua told the Godwin children of the coming of spring, when the silvery shad fish filled the river. He told how his people held feasts after quantities of the shining beauties had been caught in the waters of the swift Passaic.

Bass, also, were plentiful, and turtles and eels. Mashua said his people always gave thanks to the Great Spirit by ceremonial dancing and singing when many fish filled the river.

But, continued Mashua, some people saw devils and witches dancing from stone to stone, down deep in the chasm of the Great Falls. They also dreamed of snake fights and evil spirits.

But Mashua dreamed of watching for the deer that would bound down the mountainside. And Mashua went over to the corner of the kitchen where his bow and arrows stood.

Raising the bow, he placed an arrow in position to show the children how he dropped a stag by the swift Passaic River.

That stag, Mashua explained, meant plenty of venison to

eat and warm deer-skin leggings for the Indians in the cold winter.

All too soon, bedtime came. The children climbed up the home-made ladder that leaned against the wall in the corner of the kitchen. Up they went to their cots in the loft above.

Abraham and the other children crawled under the hand-woven blankets. They were not afraid of the weird night call of the owl — woo-who-who. They were not afraid of the sharp, rough bark of the wolves that stood on the hills above the river.

No danger could come to them. They knew Chief Mashua was in the kitchen, resting on a heap of furs in front of the smoldering logs in the big fireplace.

Even though Mashua rested, the Godwin family were sure that the Indian's eagle eyes and sharp ears did not sleep.

In the distance, the constant roar of the Great Passaic Falls, sang a lullaby to the white children in the small house in the Indian Country.

FIFE AND DRUM

Abraham and David were growing to be big boys. They grew strong and tall. Their eyes were as quick as an Indian's and their fingers were expert in handling bows and arrows.

Both boys could throw a spear into the quiet eddies of the Passaic River and catch fish with the speed of the Kingfisher bird.

Totowa had grown, too. Now there was a church built of stone and wood. Their father was one of the builders, and so was his friend Martin Ryerson, and the other settlers.

Mr. Godwin had also built the first cotton mill ever to be driven by water power in the new country. Even though he was very busy in the iron and cotton business, Mr. Godwin was also a captain of King George's Horse Troop and had charge of drilling the men.

These were the early days in the history of our country and New Jersey. How long ago was it?

Hold up your hands. Your thumb is your Daddy, next

finger is grandpa, the next is great-grandpa. Keep counting your fingers until you have used up seven or eight or maybe nine. That will take you back all the generations of grandpas to 1775 and 1776. This was the time when the Revolutionary War started, and when Abraham and David lived near the swift Passaic River and the Great Falls.

Just about this time everything suddenly changed. New Jersey and the other thirteen colonies were no longer friends with England.

Captain Godwin felt that America had been treated badly by King George and therefore he resigned as captain of the Horse Troop.

Instead, he sided with the Americans and was made a captain of the Marines on the ship "Lady Washington" that lay in New York Harbor.

Do you remember how the lives of the Prevost children changed when the Revolutionary War came to their grandmother's house in Hopper's Town? Neighbors who had been friends became enemies instead.

People acted the same way in Totowa. Many old neighbors now called Captain Godwin a "rebel." And they themselves were called "Tories" because they still wanted George III for their king.

Everyone was too busy and worried to be happy. Even Abraham and David had learned to play the fife and beat the drum. They and their friends drilled just as their fathers and older brothers did.

The boys no longer played games with the neighbor boys or fished for the fun of it in the swift Passaic River.

Drilling Around Liberty Pole

David set up a Liberty Pole in front of the Godwin house. At the top he fastened a red flag with the word "Liberty" written in large white letters. Then he gathered a company of boys together and they drilled up and down, up and down, in front of the Liberty Pole.

Henry, the oldest Godwin son, was away in Fishkill,

New York, where he had been studying law. He joined the 5th Regiment. Meanwhile, the family at home had many hardships.

In cold December 1775, the American troops retreated across New Jersey. When the hungry American soldiers marched through Totowa, Captain Godwin gave them enough food to last two days, although he had very little money.

He brought grain and had it ground into flour at his own mill. He bought beef and hogs and vegetables. Then Captain Godwin guided the Americans through the woods and through the Newark Mountains and then showed them the road that went south to New Brunswick.

Abraham was now thirteen years old, and David was ten. One day, Captain Woolverton and a company of Minute Men arrived in Totowa. Abraham happened to be playing the fife and David was beating the drum.

The Minute Men thought the brothers played very well, and as they needed some music to cheer up their spirits when they marched, Captain Woolverton asked Mrs. Godwin to allow the boys to join the soldiers.

What a patriot she was! What could the mother say but "Yes" as the boys had set their hearts on joining. So the two brothers marched away to join the army.

Now began so many dangerous experiences that it is hard to believe they could all really have happened to two young boys.

After the fifer and drummer had been at General Washington's Headquarters at White Plains for some time, they were temporarily discharged from the army. This meant the boys were on their own. They could not go home to Totowa, as the British held all the country around.

So the boys traveled to Fishkill, where they found their father. But soon the boys had a chance to travel with troops who were going south. Mile after mile the men and boys marched, sleeping out in the woods without cover even in the rain. Often the boys and men were hungry.

Finally they could hear the roar of the Great Falls. They were nearly home.

But they did not run to the house. First they hid in the bushes on a hill behind the church. They were horrified to see the British soldiers ransacking the Ryerson and Vanderbeek houses.

After what seemed a very long while, the enemy went away. Carefully the boys crept down the hill to their home. What a sad sight they saw!

The doors and windows were smashed and everything was gone, stolen or burned. Not even a cup of tea was left in the cupboard. Their poor mother cried, and the boys tried to comfort her.

Finally, a few kind neighbors supplied the mother and daughters with something to eat and bedding and clothes to make them comfortable.

The boys longed to stay at home and help their mother and sisters, but they could not run the risk of being captured by the enemy, who knew Abraham and David had been in the American Army.

When Captain Godwin up in Fishkill heard about the calamity that had happened to his family, he tried to have General Poor in Paramus help them. But he could not.

Neither could the father go home to his family. There was a price on his head. This was because he had been an officer under King George before the War, and now he was a rebel.

Captain Godwin had been seriously wounded in battle and was very sick. When he heard the sad news of the hardships inflicted on his family in Totowa, the good man was heartbroken, and he died.

Although his wife rode on horseback weary mile after weary mile to see her husband, Mrs. Godwin arrived in Fishkill too late.

On December 29, 1776, Abraham and David joined the 5th Regiment at Fishkill, the same regiment in which their brother, Henry, had been made a captain. Abraham was made a Fife-major and David a drummer boy.

All through the winter of 1777, Abraham and David stayed at Fishkill. Then in the spring the boys moved with the regiment to Fort Montgomery, which was across the Hudson River from West Point.

From morning till night, every one including the two brothers worked at top speed to build the fortifications and make Fort Montgomery so strong that the British could not get up the Hudson River.

At Sterling and Ringwood, iron ore was mined and then carted to blacksmiths in the valley. At their forges, the blacksmiths fashioned the hot iron into great loops for an enormous chain. The chain was stretched across the Hudson River.

The boys had many jobs to do: helping row the boats, carrying tools and food to the soldiers, and playing their

fife and drum when the men were very tired and homesick.

At last, when summer came, the great task was finished. The chain blocked the river.

But meanwhile, the enemy sent ships up the Hudson River to test the strength of the Fort. The Americans fought like wildcats and repulsed the British time and again.

But the enemy was very smart. They landed several miles down the river from the Fort and then marched up the hills and in back of the fort.

What a horrible surprise to the Americans to find the enemy behind them!

The fighting grew worse and worse, so that General Clinton was afraid that the enemy would win and take the fort. Quickly he decided that his important military papers must be taken to safety.

"David, David the little drummer boy, – where is he?" shouted the general. When the boy was found, General Clinton said, "David, ride – ride for your life, and take these papers across the Hudson to ...." and he whispered the name into the boy's ear.

Hardly were the words spoken when two swift horses

were brought. David mounted one, and a soldier, Major Rosmont's brother, mounted the other. The man and the boy galloped out of camp just in the nick of time.

The horses stumbled over the loose stones as they clambered up the steep, narrow mountain road.

At last David and his companion reached Buttermilk Falls. Down by the shore of the Hudson River, they found a bateau, or flat-bottomed boat, and men who agreed to row the travelers across the river.

Back and forth, back and forth went the oars in the strong hands of the men. Soon the boat grated on the opposite shore and David and his companion mounted their horses and galloped down the strange road.

Always the boy and the man watched and listened, because the enemy might be hidden in the dark woods.

Strong storm winds blew, and flashing streaks of lightning made the horses skittish. Whenever David's horse jumped and reared, the boy had a hard job to control the reins with only one hand. This was because he also had to hold onto the old pillow case of letters that was tied to the saddle.

Suddenly, the horse made a side lunge, and David could

feel the pillow case begin to tear. "If I can only hold the bundle together a little longer," David whispered to himself.

Then, because he was so short, David raised himself in the stirrups so that he could see down the road between the horse's ears. There ahead was a light through the trees. A light meant a house, and perhaps help.

David spurred his horse on. Luckily, the owner of the house proved to be a friend to the American soldiers. Quickly, he gave David a fine strong bag. The important letters were stuffed inside and the bag was tied securely to the saddle.

David and his companion turned in their saddles and waved thanks as they rode on again.

It was very late and very dark. The two travelers and the two horses were very tired.

After a while they came to another house. But when David knocked at the door and asked if he and his companion might stay overnight, the people answered that they expected the British to come at any minute.

Without saying goodby, David and his companion whipped up their horses and galloped away.

On and on they rode, letting the horses take the bridle bits in their own teeth and pick their own way through the darkness and fog.

A heavy shower of rain soaked David and his companion down to their very skins. But soon the road began to look familiar. The faithful horses had found the right road to Fishkill.

Again the weary travelers and the two tired horses stopped at a house. But every bed and room was filled with people. In the barn there was nothing for the poor horses to eat.

On and on the travelers rode in the rain. They were very much discouraged.

Finally they came to a small log hut. A very old gentleman opened the door and welcomed David and his companion inside.

The boy unbuckled the saddle straps with the precious bag of military papers still tied to it, and staggered and stumbled into the house.

Down on the floor went the saddle and bag of precious letters. Down on top of his load went David – wet through, and completely tired out.

The kind old man gave the horses some cornstalks to eat. That was the only food he had on his farm for them. Then he led the horses into a shed out of the rain.

In the house, the only food the old man had to give David and his companion was some rye bread, buttermilk and molasses. The travelers ate with hearty relish and thanked their host, over and over again.

Almost immediately, the food and the warmth from the fire on the hearth put David to sleep.

But not for long. From the Hudson River came a terrific explosion and a great light. David knew that the Americans had set their guard ships afire so that the British could not capture them.

What had happened to Abraham and brother Henry when the fierce fighting went on? David had left them at Fort Montgomery when he galloped out of the north gate with the important letters. David was very much worried.

Long before the sun came up and shone into the small window of the hut, the boy and the man mounted their horses and rode toward the American camp.

That was a great day for David, because he at last delivered the precious papers to General Clinton's friends. The

boy was given many praises and thanks by all the soldiers, and this made David very proud because his mission had been well done.

THREE CHEERS FOR THE GODWINS

Even though David's mission had ended successfully, all the while he had been worried about his brothers, Abraham and Henry.

He asked a great many men about them, and finally learned that Abraham had escaped from the enemy by jumping into the deep Hudson River and swimming across to safety. Soon David and Abraham were together again, and they were never separated until the end of the war.

But David was very sad when he was told that his brother, Henry, had been taken prisoner. The British put him on the old "Jersey Ship" and then on the "Provost Ship." The poor young captain was held prisoner for three long years. After that, because of his great hardships, he died.

Captain Henry, the second hero in the Godwin family to die during the Revolutionary War, was buried with full military honors near his father at Fishkill.

The War dragged on and on. By this time, the little fife and drummer boys had grown into young men. Finally, the war was over and the brothers were home at last.

Then David decided to write down everything he could remember about the seven long years that he and Abraham had been away from home. He also decided to write down everything that had happened to his family. That is why you and I know so much about the wonderful Godwin family.

David wrote about the winter he and Abraham were in Poughkeepsie with the Life Guard that protected the New York Governor, George Clinton. He told all about the expedition against the Six Indian Nations and the campaign into the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania.

The writer's own words were, "It was a hard journey into Indian territory and many good pack horses were lost."

The winter the brothers were at General Washington's Headquarters at Morristown was one that made David happy to write about. That was the winter he and Abraham traveled over the frozen roads from Morristown to see their mother and sisters at Totowa.

But David was sad when he remembered the two long years that the brothers were far away from home. Not even a letter or message reached them from their family.

David told how he and his brother suffered from the dreadful cold at night in winter. He wrote about how they

suffered from the heat in summer, how they were often hungry and sick.

But the campaigns and fighting were all over at last, and David wrote with pride that he and Abraham had even been with the victorious Americans at Yorktown, Virginia. They had witnessed the British surrender.

Now all during the seven years that the boys had been away to War, they had not gone to school one single day. This worried their mother very much. But she need not have worried, because her sons were smart and ambitious.

THE WOODMAN

Drawn from A. Godwin's self-portrait

David gave us a great deal of information about his brother. Without much instruction, Abraham became a fine engraver, he painted pictures, he played various musical instruments, and he told wonderful stories.

The one-time fifer wrote poems, one called "Liberty, Sweet Liberty," and another, about his favorite Passaic River, called "To My Native River."

As Abraham grew older, everyone trusted him and loved him. Wherever people gathered together, Abraham was called "the life of the party" because he was so jolly.

But he was not always having a good time. Abraham Godwin was now called a general, and he worked for his new United States. The people elected him to high positions in the government and he became one of the greatest citizens in New Jersey.

Forty years had passed since the Revolutionary War was over, and General Washington was dead. In 1824, General Lafayette, George Washington's friend, sailed from France to visit his adopted country, the United States.

General Lafayette visited New York, and also crossed the Hudson River to travel through New Jersey. He went over the old roads that he had traveled with General Washing-

ton and the other great men. The Frenchman made a pilgrimage to the Passaic Falls, and Abraham and all the people welcomed him.

At the Great Falls, General Lafayette once again looked at the rock where his name was carved into the stone near General Washington's name.

A great honor came to General Godwin in 1829. Because he was held in high regard by everybody, a whole section in Bergen County was named after him, and was called "Godwinville."

Where is Godwinville today? Gone! Almost everyone would be surprised to know that once, parts of Ridgewood, Paramus, Glen Rock and Midland Park were grouped together and called "Godwinville."

Today there are just a few reminders of General Godwin's great name. Sometime if you visit Ridgewood you may see a statue of Abraham in the park on Van Neste Square. Also, you will find that the oldest street in Ridgewood is called Godwin Avenue, and in Midland Park a school has been named for the Revolutionary War hero.

There is also a street in Paterson by the same name.

Abraham and David and the whole Godwin family were

David and Abraham

surely New Jersey's own patriots. Here's THREE CHEERS for the GODWINS!

AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER

After seven long years of fighting, the Revolutionary War was over. The soldiers came back to their families. Once more they attended to their farms and other work.

Although the War was ended and General Washington and his troops were no longer in Paramus, the memory of the great general still filled the hearts and minds of the people.

On the Sabbath, after church service, the men and women gathered to talk, and their talk always turned back to the old days.

They talked about the War and proudly reminded each other that General Washington had attended Paramus Church on July 12th in the year 1778.

Often the boys whispered together. One asked, "Do you remember when our church was a prison? Or do you remember when our church was used as a court of law and Major Charles Lee was tried here because he made bad mistakes at the Battle of Monmouth?"

"Yes, but I was very young," answered his friend, "only

knee-high to a grasshopper. I do remember hearing how supplies for our army were stored in Paramus Church, and that the British stole some tea."

"That is true." The first boy laughed and then added sadly, "Look at our church. How dilapidated! It is almost falling down."

Everyone felt just as the boys did. Everyone agreed that something should be done about the church. Therefore, the congregation held long discussions.

Should the old octagonal stone church be repaired, or should an entirely new one be built instead? Finally, they decided to build a new church, and to build it larger than

the old one.

After some years, the men set to work and laid the new foundations on a place only a few feet from where the old church had stood. Many of the brown sandstones that the men put into the four walls of the new church were taken from the walls of the old Peremus octagonal Kirk. In 1800, the new church was ready to use.

After the beautiful church with its high steeple was finished, the people put all their energy into working on their homes and farms and doing all their other business.

In those days, Jersey farmers knew how to do just about every necessary job around their homes and barns and fields.

A boy learned to use tools as soon as he could hold a hammer and hit a nail instead of hitting his fingers. Therefore, by the time he was fifteen, he had become a great help to his family.

He knew how to mend furniture, put a patch on a roof, care for a newborn calf, or whittle play toys from pieces of wood for the children in the family.

The farmer's wife and women folk were busy all day long. They were up long before the sun showed his bright face in the east and their work was not finished until long after the sun disappeared in the west.

Many hours were spent cooking the meals over the log fire in the great hearth. And in between times, the women were busy spinning and weaving.

Little girls, and sometimes small boys spent long hours knitting heavy wool stockings for their parents and brothers and sisters.

Besides the many household duties, the women folk worked outside in the gardens too. Almost every housewife had an herb garden close by the kitchen door. These herb plants were precious possessions in the early days before spices and medicines could be bought in the country stores.

A good cook dried the plants that had spicy or tangy tastes. Then she sprinkled the herb seasonings into the big stewpot. Other herb roots and stalks and even flowers were brewed and made into medicines that were supposed to cure almost any disease. Also in the gardens were plants with sweet pleasant odors that were favorites with girls who were

engaged to be married. After the plants or herbs had been carefully dried, they were put into the girl's dower or bridal chest.

Before long, the homespun sheets and pillowcases and blankets; also clothes and everything in the chest had the same fragrance as the herb plants.

Everybody was busy everywhere. Up and down the little rivers, the grist mills hummed all day long.

In the Zaborowski mill at Red Mills, the great water wheels turned and splashed, turned and splashed. Men brought bags of wheat and rye and corn grains to be ground into flour between the giant mill stones.

While the men waited for the flour, they talked and talked with their friend, the miller. After the news of all the neighbors for miles around had been heard, the men almost always turned their talk back to the War days.

Red Mills

"What a day that was!" declared the miller as he watched the ground meal pour into the woven sack. "I'll never forget what a sight that was to see the young Frenchman, General Lafayette. We all rushed out of the mill and cheered and cheered when he passed by with his men."

"Yes, yes," quickly answered one of the men. "That was a happy day when General Lafayette marched on to the Wagaraw Road and then to headquarters at Ryerson's farm on the Goffle."

"And a good turn the French did for us," continued the miller. "We will never forget how Lafayette and his men helped win the War."

"True, true," agreed the farmer, "but I have work to do. I must be getting on home." The man hesitated as though he would have liked to stay and talk longer with his friends.

However, his flour was ground and had already been loaded onto his wagon. "Goodby," the farmer called over his shoulder as he turned his horse around. "I have just time enough before the supper bell rings to mend that strip of rail fence down by the south pasture."

"Plague take the British for stealing our fence posts and rails for their camp fires!" said another farmer angrily. "Even though the War has been over for years, my work is never done. Besides the fences to mend, my barn needs a new roof, and my house isn't big enough since our girl, Sally, married. Besides," he added, "I must have more outbuildings for the stock before winter comes."

The farmer thought a minute, and then said, "That will be heavy work, putting up the roof on the cow barn – too much for me and only my son, Jake. Neighbors, will you come and have a barn-raising, and help me?"

"Yes, yes, sure enough," answered his group of friends.

"And will your women folk give us a spread – pies and doughnuts and cider, after the work is done?" one of the men asked, laughingly.

"That they will. We will have a great party, like the old times."

The men separated, and as they rode away, they shouted, "We'll be there, every last one of us – our women folk and all our kith and kin, too."

THE COWBOY OF THE RAMAPOS

In the old days, weddings were times for great celebrations among the grown-ups with plenty of fun and food for everybody. After the solemn wedding ceremony was over, the young folks danced and everyone talked and talked. Then a feast was spread on the big table, and young and old ate as much as they could hold.

Afterward, the men gathered in groups and talked about the weather, and how tall the corn had grown. The women talked about their homes and their children.

But by that time, the boys and girls were tired of talking and running around, and they wanted to hear a good story. Aunt Bess was a good story teller, but if she were busy, there was always old Uncle Jake. All his stories were exciting, but the favorite one was about Claudius Smith, the bad cowboy of the Ramapos.

"Well, it was when we were fighting the Revolutionary War," began Uncle Jake. The children gathered closer to the old man so as to catch every word.

"Up in the Ramapo Mountains, just north of Paramus, there was a man named Claudius Smith."

"Was he a good man?" asked Sarah timidly.

"No, indeed," answered Uncle Jake with a shake of his head. "Claudius Smith was a bad one. He was the leader of the bandit cowboys and the bad men had a secret hide-out," added the old man, lowering his voice almost to a whisper. The children drew closer.

"After dark," Uncle Jake continued, "the bandit cowboys rode down from their secret cave in the mountains to steal horses and cattle from their neighbors in the valley."

"When they had taken the horses out of the barns and the cows from the fields, the bandits drove them up the mountain trails and hid them in the huge cave. As soon as possi-

ble, the bandits sold the animals to the British." Uncle Jake stopped talking and sat quiet for a minute.

"Go on, please go on," the boys and girls begged. "What happened next?"

"Terrible things." Uncle Jake gazed out of the window with a faraway look in his dim blue eyes.

"Barns were burned, houses ransacked and everybody scared to death. Why, that devil man – a handsome brute he was, too – even stole a young girl, named Katherine Onderdonk. Claudius Smith said he loved her, but Katherine hated him like poison."

"Oh, oh," cried the little girls. "How did she ever get back home again?"

"Easy, now," Uncle Jake said. "You see, her folks had an old colored man who worked for them. He loved his young mistress and, somehow, he found out where Katherine was hidden in a cave a few miles away from the bandit's hideout."

"Oh, my, he was brave, wasn't he?" Little Peter put his hand into Uncle Jake's big one.

"Certainly was. Those woods were mighty big and those men mighty bad. But the old colored man led a rescue party

to the cave. There must have been a fight with the guards, but Katherine was freed and taken home to her family."

"I'm so glad." Sarah spoke as though Katherine was someone she knew, and not someone who had lived years and years before the small girl was born.

"Things had gotten so bad and people were so scared," went on Uncle Jake, "that they asked George Washington to form a posse to capture Claudius Smith and his band of traitors."

A leader of the posse at Ramapough Pass was John Suffern, the father of Betsy. All around in the mountains and north and south, other posses were formed to help round up the bandits. Uncle Jake told his audience that sometimes the posses were called "skinners."

"But after many a wild chase over the mountainous country, the Bad Cowboy escaped and the Tory gang scattered and disappeared. That did not stop the skinners from hunting for Claudius Smith," continued Uncle Jake. "Nope, not even when the war was over."

Finally, after several years, the Bad Cowboy was captured. The story-teller looked from one of the children to another, and then said slowly, "The traitor was tried by a court in a place called Goshen in New York State, and was hanged

in the courtyard for his terrible crimes. And that was the end of Claudius Smith, the Scourge of the Ramapo Highlands. But the stories of the man's evil doings have lived long after he was dead."

Uncle Jake looked solemn for a minute, and then said, "That's all until the next time we meet, my young friends."

Many years have passed since Uncle Jake told the story about Claudius Smith, but the cave in the mountains near Tuxedo is still a place of thrilling mystery.

Hikers of all ages climb up the trail. They stand at the opening of the dark rocky den and imagine the bad cowboys hiding there.

Arrow and Spear Heads

But at the same time, hikers imagine Indians living in the cave and cooking fish and game on the rocky ledge outside. This is because people have learned a great deal about the cave from the Indian relics that have been dug up out of the ground.

The hikers know that they are actually standing at the

openings of the Red Man's home in the days long before Claudius Smith was born.

What a mysterious place the cave is, where double ghosts and double haunts seem alive!

TAKE YOUR CHOICE

Up in Saddle River, in the Ackerman family, a new baby had arrived. Of course, grandpas and grandmas and aunts and cousins from Red Mills traveled up the Valley to take presents to the tiny new relative.

The children were overjoyed by the visits to relatives' homes, especially to see a new baby. For awhile they sat quietly looking at the sleeping new cousin, while the grown-ups talked. But soon the boys and girls became restless and begged Aunt Bess to tell them stories.

"Come, boys and girls, to the garden with me," invited Aunt Bess. "Oh, yes, I'll race you there," challenged Abraham as he ran down the path with the speed of a young deer.

Aunt Bess settled herself under the great spreading oak tree. The children were thirsty, and so had stopped along the way to drink from the Indian spring that bubbled from the rocky ledge nearby.

"Here we are in Saddle River," began Aunt Bess when her listeners were seated on the soft green grass. "Isn't

it a queer name for a river and the hilly country on each side?"

Then the story-teller continued without waiting for an answer. "Well, there are several stories about the name. One is new since the War, and is about George Washington."

"At the time of our story, General Washington had headquarters in Paramus. One day, while on military business in the neighborhood, it was necessary for him to cross the Saddle River. In those days," explained Aunt Bess, "horsemen did not bother about going over bridges, but simply rode their horses through the water."

"The General's horse stepped down the bank and splashed through the river. But as he stepped up the opposite bank, the horse jerked and his saddle girth, or strap, loosened so that General Washington almost lost his balance and almost fell into the water!"

Aunt Bess stopped, and Abraham said, "I don't believe that story, do you? General Washington could ride without any saddle."

"No, I do not," agreed Aunt Bess. "Besides, the Saddle River had its name long before the Revolutionary War when General Washington was here."

"Please tell us the other stories about Saddle River's name," begged golden-haired Janetje.

"Do the rest of you wish to listen?" Aunt Bess asked.

"Yes, yes!" everyone said at once.

"A long time ago, when there were only Indians here," continued Aunt Bess, "a white man, named Richard Saddler, bought land from the Indians and settled near the river. In those days, a settler's name often became the name of the settlement where he lived. Therefore, some people believed that the river and land around here were named after the first settler."

"That might be true," said a small boy wisely. "But isn't there another story, even after those two?"

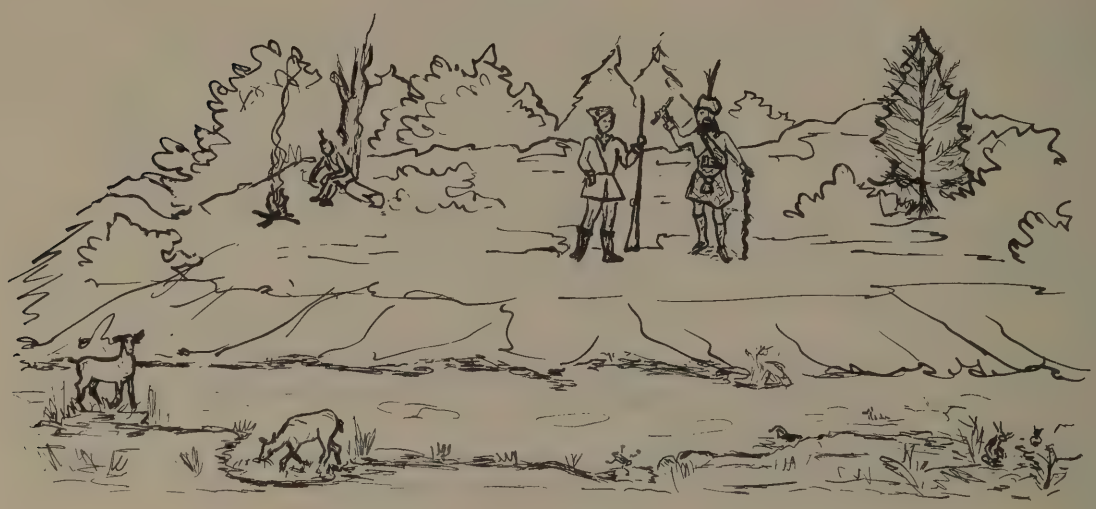
"Yes," Aunt Bess answered, and then she explained to her young audience that once the river had been called "Wawpack River" or "Tackamack" by the Indians.

"Once white men came on sailing ships from faraway Scotland. They came to New Jersey and explored our little river. Then the men made maps, outlining the hills and the valleys with the river running between."

Aunt Bess paused for breath. "Go on, please go on," everyone said at once.

"When the maps were finished, some of the Scotchmen thought the hills were shaped exactly like a horse's saddle. So they wrote "Saddle River" on their maps.

"But there were other explorers who were made very homesick when they rode through the beautiful valleys on horseback and crossed the clear, swift-running rivers. These men said that the countryside was so very beautiful that they were reminded of their homes in Saddle Burn in Bonnie Scotland."



"Oh, I like that story best," said little Janetje. She turned to Aunt Bess and put her arm around her.

"I do, too," agreed her Aunt, and she gave the golden-haired Janetje a hug.

"But there, now – you all may take your own choice of which story you wish to believe." The good woman had scarcely finished speaking when voices were heard calling.

The children quickly thanked their favorite aunt, kissed her and then raced off to the house. Everybody climbed into the wagon, and because happiness filled the hearts of the people, they all sang together as they rode up and down hill along the rippling Saddle River to their home in Paramus.

THE GREAT ROCK CALLED PAIN-MAIK-A-PU'-KA

The Great Rock

Maude Berdan, her sister Martha, and her brothers scampered up the homemade ladder that leaned against the great rock.

"My, it's high up here," said Maude. "We're way up in the treetops and almost as high as the roof of Great Uncle John's barn."

Maude always said that, every time she visited Great Uncle John Andrew Marinus and Great Aunt Elizabeth. Visits to the country farm in Glen Rock were wonderful treats to the children. They lived in the city of Paterson.

"I love it here," agreed Martha as she stretched out full-length on the sun-warmed flat top of the big boulder. "I always feel so far away and sort of mysterious" she added, half to herself.

"Aw, let's eat some nuts," shouted Alfred as he hauled on the rope he held in his hand. Up over the side of the rock came a feed bag. It was heavy with chestnuts that the children had gathered under the tree beside the rock.

The frost had popped most of the chestnuts out of the burrs, but some were still hidden inside the prickly balls.

Garret carefully picked up a burr and placed it in the little hollow in the center of the great boulder. Then he smashed the burr with a small stone. This small stone, just the right size to hold firmly in your hand, was always left on the top of the great rock, just for the purpose of cracking nuts. Sometimes they were hickory, sometimes hazel, sometimes black walnuts or butternuts.

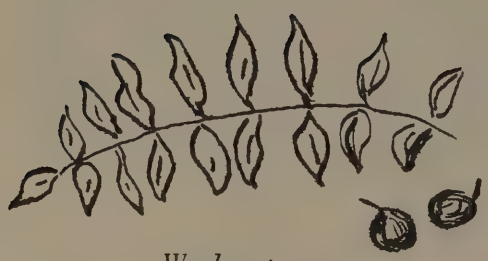
When Garret smashed the burr, three plump brown chestnuts with three feathery tails lay in the golden brown velvety

lining. Garret smashed another burr. The eager children pulled out the nuts by their feathery tails and popped them into their mouths.

"Crack!" went four sets of strong teeth, and out came the nuts again. Before you could say "Jack Robinson!" the thin brown shells were peeled off and the firm white meat was popped into four mouths and chewed up.

Butternut

Chestnut



Walnut

Hickory

"Do you suppose Indians ate chestnuts up on this rock, too?" asked Martha. The question was a teaser. Martha knew the answer as well as the others. But she tossed her curls and looked straight at Alfred.

"Of course not, Silly," snapped Alfred in disgust. "Don't you remember Great Uncle John telling us that this rock was very important to the Minsi Indians?"

"It was used for ceremonies and council meetings. Pain-Maik-A-Pu'-Ka, they called it." Alfred talked so fast that he ran out of breath and before he could go on, Garret added his bit.

"Imagine, this rock, right where we're sitting, was a sort of halfway mark between Indian villages. The Indian trails were from Hackensack to Red Mills and then on to Oakland, where the Ponds Church stands. Another trail was from Newark Bay to Suffern."

"But just think," joined in Maude as she patted the rough stone with her hand. "Just think, great Uncle John said this rock was put here by a glacier. That was in the Ice Age, long, long ago, long before even the Indians came to New Jersey."

"Please give me another chestnut," begged Martha.

"Just a minute," rebuked Alfred. "You asked for it, so sit still and hear the rest of the story about this rock."

"After the white settlers came, they used the rock, too. It was a marker to measure distances from one place to another. In 1710, it was a boundary marker when the white people bought the Ramapo Tract of land from the Indians. You can read about it in the deed, or some important paper, telling about building the Reformed Church in Wyckoff."

"Wow, what a memory you have!" teased Martha.

"You keep still," put in Maude. "Why, I bet George Washington and General Lafayette heard about the Great Rock when they camped near here. It's on the old maps."

"Anyhow, our ancestors lived nearby during the Revolutionary War. Great Uncle John always talks about David Marinus, who was a captain. He got captured by the British."

"Poor young Captain Marinus," soft-hearted Martha wiped a tear away with the corner of her apron. "He was kept in that dreadful Sugar House Prison in New York. He escaped and came home, but he died," the girl finished with a sob.

"But that was awfully long ago," reasoned Maude. "There was another David, the Captain's father, that Great Aunt Elizabeth always talks about. He was a minister before the Revolutionary War. What adventures he must have had, riding horseback wherever he went preaching! His churches in Totowa, Acquackanonk, Pompton Plains and the old Ponds Church were miles and miles apart. He was away from home overnight lots of times, Great Aunt says."

"Gee whiz, I wish I had been alive when the Indian villages were near here and George Washington camped around here. There were wolves and red foxes in the woods."

Garret sprang to his feet and cocked his index finger at an imaginary wolf over behind the barn.

"I only like to read about such things," said Martha as she quietly twisted her auburn curls over her fingers. "Then the settlers called panthers, 'painters.' In some old books, red was spelled REDD. Men were paid money for killing the 'painters' and redd foxes."

"Well, they were real dangerous," and Garret jumped up again and aimed his imaginary gun.

"Believe me, I'm glad I live right now." Maude tightened the red ribbons on the ends of her long brown braids. "I'm hungry and thirsty. Wish that spring of cold water that the Indians used to drink from under this rock was here now. What was that funny Indian name?" Maude turned to Alfred, knowing he would remember.

"Let's see. It commenced, 'Essen' – let's see – oh, yes, 'Essenmaykapulig.' That meant 'where clear water bubbles from under the rock.'"

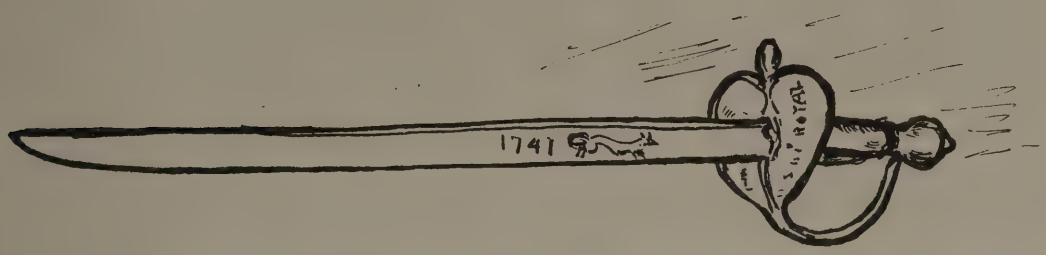
"That memory again!" exclaimed Garret, laughing.

"Well, the water is all gone, but I know what!" shouted Maude. "Let's ask Great Aunt Elizabeth if we can have some fresh cider and doughnuts."

Quicker than you could snap your fingers, the children slid down the side of the rock on the ladder and raced off to the nearby farmhouse. They were sure Great Aunt Elizabeth would say "Yes."

THE MYSTERIOUS SWORD

"Dad, please tell me the story of our mysterious sword, once again," Jared Banta, Junior, hurriedly greeted his father as he came into the living room. Then the boy went over to the fireplace and stood looking up at the sword hanging above the mantel.



"Well, Son," good-naturedly began Mr. Banta, "this year is 1951 and you are twelve years old, just the same age I was when I became interested in the mysterious sword and asked about it. And your grandfather, Cornelius Ackerman Banta, was also twelve years old when he was told about the sword. However, your grandfather was actually allowed to play with it. I never was."

Mr. Banta settled himself more comfortably in his chair, while Jared Junior watched him impatiently.

"Well, no one in the family, not even your grandfather, knew very much about the sword. But each Banta father told

his children that during the Revolutionary War several battles had been fought near the Paramus Church. Also, it is common knowledge in our family that both the British and the Americans had encampments near here."

"But what about the sword?" Jared questioned again.

"None of us ever knew the exact time our ancestor found the sword. But there it was, stuck into the rafters up in the hayloft of the Banta family barn. Generation after generation of Bantas have asked the same questions, just as you and I have. How did the sword get into the rafters of the barn? Whose sword was it, and when did he lose it? But, my boy, the answers have never been found to this day."

"But you did know that it was made before the Revolutionary War, and didn't you think it was perhaps British?"

"Yes," answered his father. "There is the date '1747' on the blade. But mystery or not, all the generations of Banta boys loved to hear about it, and as I have said before, some of them had great fun playing soldier with it."

Turning so as to have a better look at his son's face, Mr. Banta continued the story. "Jared, do you remember that I have told you what a small New Jersey village Ridgewood was when I was a boy of your age?"

"Yes," answered Jared.

"I lived on a farm, and so did your grandpa, when he was a boy," continued his father. "Our farm was out near the edge of the village, near the old Paramus Church. I went to the old District No. 45 schoolhouse that still stands today on the church grounds."

Mr. Banta sat still, thinking. "Back in those days, all girls and boys did chores. In other words, they helped their mothers around the house or their dads out in the barns and fields. One of the chores your grandpa liked was feeding the chickens."

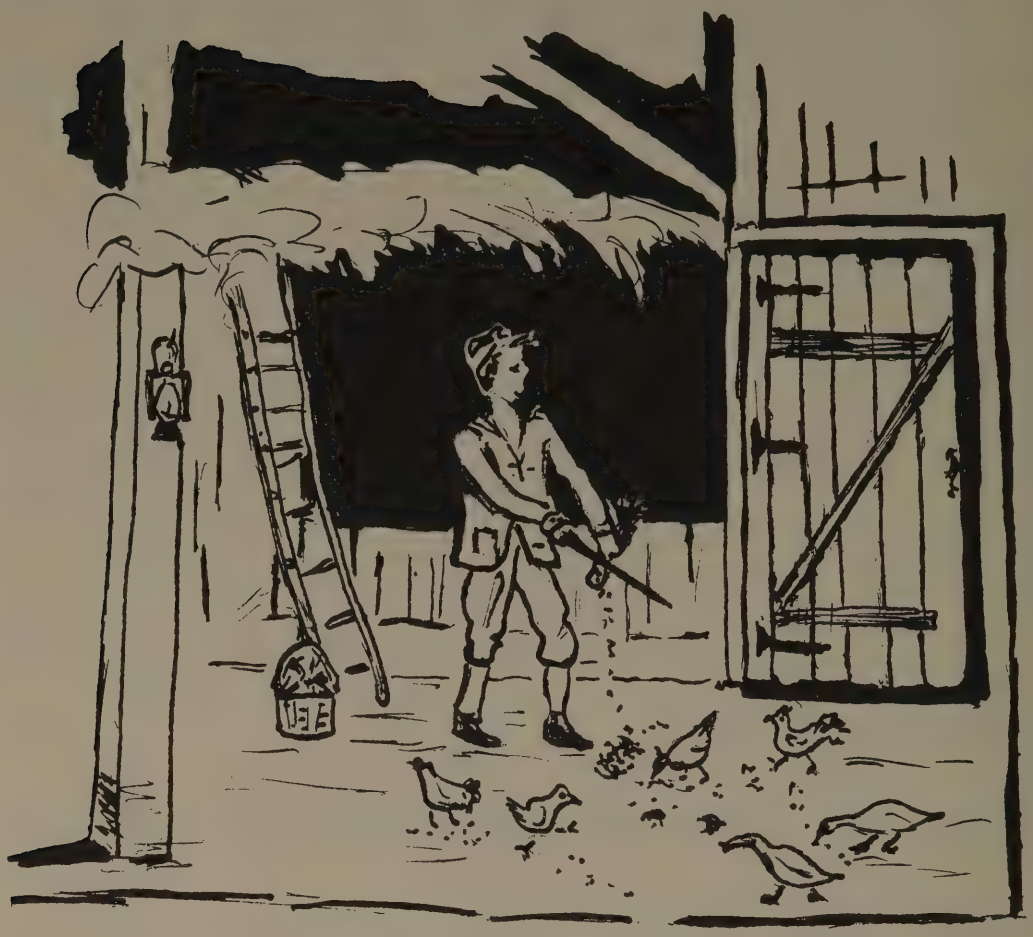
"Why?" asked young Jared, just as though he had never heard the story before.

"It wasn't because he was fond of the chickens," chuckled his father. "He always said they were really silly, clucking bunches of feathers. No, here's the real reason. Usually the kernels of corn were stripped from the ears by a machine, called a corn sheller, and so the feed was all ready to throw to the chickens," Jared's father explained.

Mr. Banta got up from his favorite chair and stood by his son so that both of them looked directly at the sword.

"You see, Jared," continued his father, "if old Jake,

the hired man, wasn't looking, your grandpa would grab the sword from the rafters where the family always left it hanging, and would hack away the kernels of corn from the cobs."



Mr. Banta nodded his head slowly, and taking a pencil from his vest pocket, he made believe that he was scraping kernels of corn off the make-believe cob that he held in his left hand.

"That slow way of feeding the chickens made old Jake awfully mad, didn't it?" put in young Jared, trying to hurry his father.

"Yes," replied Mr. Banta. "Grandpa never could manage to hold the sword more than a few minutes. Old Jake was old, but his eyes were as quick as a squirrel's and his hearing as keen as a deer's. Besides, Jake was anxious to have the horses and cows taken care of, also, before the bell at the kitchen door rang for supper."

"Please take the sword down, so that I may hold it as a special birthday treat," pleaded Jared.

"All right, all right, Jared, my boy, but let me lay it on the table first, under that strong reading light."

Jared looked at his father in surprise. Suddenly he discovered that his Dad was smiling in a mysterious way.

"What's up, Dad?" the boy asked.

"Something pretty exciting was sent to me today, something we have all been wondering about – well, in fact, it's about the mysterious sword."

"You mean that you actually know whose sword this was?" Jared put his hand out and felt the old stag horn handle. "Yipes, Dad!"

"Go call your mother, Jared." But the boy was much too excited to move. Instead, he lifted his head and shouted at the top of his voice, "MOTHER! MOTHER! Come quick!

Hurry up and hear what Dad knows about the mysterious sword."

"Don't shout so, I'm on my way," calmly answered Mrs. Banta from the kitchen. She entered the living room just as Mr. Banta pulled a letter out of his pocket.

"This came from Mr. Greenwood today. He lives up in the Ramapos and knows so much about history. Remember him? Now, steady, everybody; first let's examine the sword and check over all of the numbers and the letters on it. Then we'll compare them with what's in this letter."

"Here's the date, 1747, cut into the steel blade," pointed out Mrs. Banta.

"Look, there's the picture of the running fox, remember it?" Jared looked up into his father's face. "And here on the hilt are the letters 'LT.COL.NO.12.' Are you going to tell us what that stands for?"

"Yes, yes," answered his father. His hands shook in his hurry to turn the sword over. "Here is '2'D BAT'N Royal' plainly written on the blade. Now let's see what we have here. Right on the top of the page." Mr. Banta struck the papers with his hand and the words tumbled out as he read very fast.

"The numbers – the letters, they are the same. 'Lt. Col. No. 12' really stands for the rank and identification of the owner. According to this letter, it was Lt. Col. Howard of the British Royal Horse Guards. What do you think of that! Here, Jared, you read this."

"Yes, sir. 'The Royal Horse Guards, a body of English Cavalry, dressed in the Oxford blue, came out of the north from Closter way, over the Wierimus Road. They were commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Howard. In the first battle, Lieutenant Colonel Howard, of the Royal Horse Guards, lost his sword.'" Jared gave the letter back to his father with the exclamation, "What do you know about that – his name was Howard!"

"Yes, the information came from British military papers. Mr. Greenwood goes on to say that he imagined Howard galloped across the Saddle River and rode through the ford, as there wasn't any bridge. Quick as a flash as he passed the Banta barn, Lieutenant Colonel Howard must have drawn his

sword from the scabbard and all in one motion lifted it above his head."

"Oh, boy!" shouted Jared.

"We can imagine the officer standing up in his stirrups and shouting the battle cry, 'For the King.' Then he gave the sword a mighty thrust into the straw roof of the barn. There it stuck for many a year afterward." Mr. Banta laid the letter down.

"Jiminy! that British officer must have been nearly jerked off his horse when he tried to pull his sword out," put in Jared excitedly. "But Lieutenant Colonel Howard couldn't stop, could he? He had to keep on galloping with his troops." Although the boy asked the question, he did not really expect an answer.

"Just a minute," said Mr. Banta. He went to the closet and came back with a long box. As he handed it to Jared, he said, "Here's another birthday surprise and another puzzler."

The boy opened the box and there inside was a toy set of leaden Royal Horse Guards. The toy men were dressed in the Earl of Oxford Blue, and their steel helmets were topped by flowing crimson plumes. They were mounted on high-stepping black horses.

Each man was perfect to the last detail; that is, all except the commanding officer. He did not have his sword.

"Mr. Greenwood gave them to you. Another box of these Royal Horse Guards, just like yours, Jared, has been given to the museum of the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society. It's awfully queer, but in that set of toy cavalrymen, too, the commanding officer is without his sword."

"Gee, Mr. Greenwood is great, isn't he? But that's a puzzler for sure. I mean about the swords. Isn't it, Dad?"

"Don't forget to let the boy hold the sword as a special birthday treat and then hang it up again," reminded Mrs. Banta.

As Mr. Banta handed over the sword to his son, he said, "Keeping this sword safe, the way our family did all these years, is the same as keeping a page of our country's history safe. Now many other people can read about the mysterious sword, too."

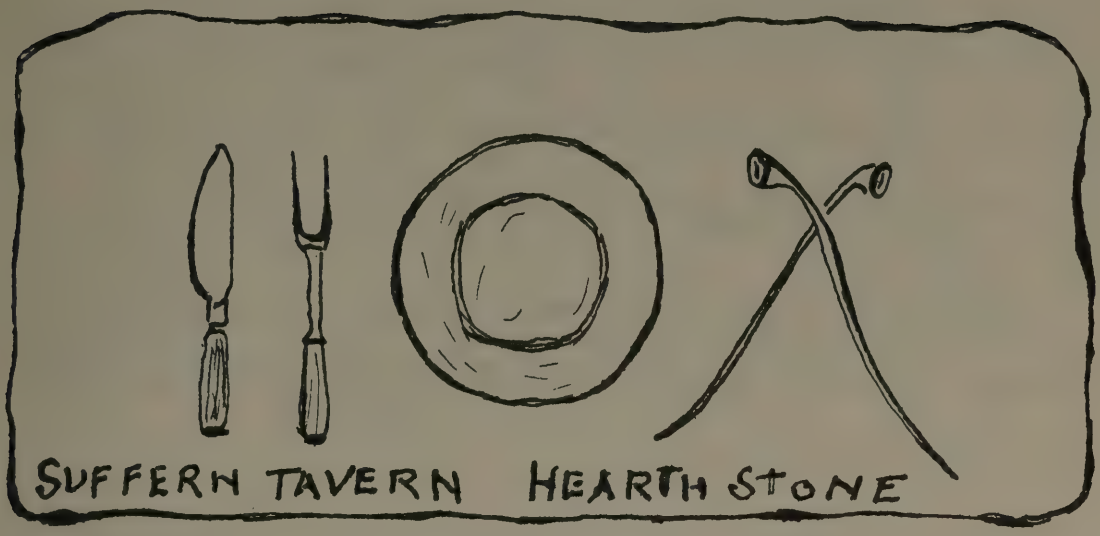
Mr. Banta put his hand on his son's shoulder and added, "Some day you will tell the story of this sword to your children. But first you will likely tell them how our ancestors left their old home in Friesland and how they sailed on the ship *De Trow* in 1659 to make new homes in free America."

"And don't forget about the battles that were fought right here near the old Paramus Church to preserve our American freedom for you and all others in the future," Mrs. Banta reminded the boy.

Jared nodded his head to all his parents said, but he could not think of any words to say.

"Good night now, Jared, my boy. This has been quite a day for us all to remember, hasn't it?"

WILD STRAWBERRIES



It was a perfect day in June when Miss Mary Suffern and her sister, Elsie, gave a special party. The children had been playing pirate on top of the giant boulder that towered like a big grey ship anchored at the edge of the lawn.

They quickly scrambled down when the hostess called, "Come, before the cream melts. Come, the strawberry shortcake is on the table under the maple tree."

"Oh, boy, is this yummie!" said Johnnie, as shortcake, strawberries and rich whipped cream disappeared in rapid succession.

"It's just heavenly – never tasted anything so delicious," agreed the grown-ups. Second helpings went the

rounds. Then, between mouthfuls, Sally asked, "Don't you know a story about George Washington, Miss Mary?"

"I certainly do," answered Miss Mary quickly; and she added, "The strawberries reminded me of George Washington and some wild strawberries. It happened when the general was staying with our ancestor, John Suffern."

The little lady leaned back in her garden chair. The grown-ups settled themselves comfortably, and the children sprawled on the cool grass.

"Yes," added her sister, Elsie. "This story, and the one about the little girl who was the dispatch rider, were handed down from one generation to the next in our family."

"Well, let's get on with the story. In those faraway days, many travelers stayed overnight at the Suffern house, and it was called a tavern. At the time of our story, the rooms were filled with important military men."

"General Washington held secret meetings with the members of his staff in a room that was guarded by soldiers. As there were enemy spies and Tories in the neighborhood, John Suffern often sat outside the house by the door. The tavern keeper quietly sat at ease, smoking his clay pipe, but really his sharp eyes and ears were on the alert for any coming danger."

Suddenly, the door opened and General Washington stepped outside. "Oh; John!" said the General, and the tavern keeper got up from his chair and came close to George Washington.

"I have something I must talk over with you, secretly," whispered the General.

"I know just the place," answered John in a low voice. "Come, Sir, I will show you."

"Wait here for me," Washington commanded his aides-de-camp. The two men walked around the house, across the meadow and up the hill.

It was June, and John knew the warm sun had ripened the strawberries that ran wild over the hillside. But he

didn't tell the General. He wanted to surprise George Washington because John knew that George Washington was very, very fond of strawberries.

"Where are you taking me?" asked the General. But John answered, "Wait just a little longer, Sir, and then you will see I have chosen a safe hide-out that you will enjoy very much."

Picking his way over rocks and through brambles, George Washington suddenly exclaimed, "Strawberries, millions of them! Why, they are all over the ground. John, you old rogue!"

"Yes, Sir, our wild strawberry patch – here's where we will talk. But wait until I pick some for – "

But the tavern keeper did not have time to finish what he was saying. The great American general was already picking the luscious berries for himself.

"Oh, I would give anything to have lived in those faraway days. Just imagine our dignified general down on his knees picking strawberries!" put in Elsie, and everybody laughed.

"Please go on," begged Sally, and Miss Mary answered, "All right. When the men's hats were filled with the ripe

red berries, General Washington and John Suffern sat on a flat rock, side by side.

"As they ate the sweet berries slowly one by one, they talked in low voices."

"What did they talk about?" asked Johnnie, as solemn as an owl.

Miss Mary turned toward him and said slowly, "No one ever knew, not anybody, but only the South Wind heard as it blew softly over the strawberry patch just then." Miss Mary cocked her small head like the little bird in the nearby tree, and placing her finger over her lips, she imitated the s-s-s-h of the South Wind blowing.

"Oh, I wish I knew – that is a real mystery story. My, it was wonderful!" and everybody agreed with Sally.

All the way home, all through dinner and until they went to bed, the boys and girls wondered and wondered what General Washington and John Suffern talked about in the wild strawberry patch. But it was a military secret, and they never found out. Only the South Wind knew.

STORIES ABOUT GEORGE WASHINGTON

Everybody, from five-year-old Janetje up to the very oldest grandpa loved to hear about George Washington, especially if the stories had happened near home. Everyone knew how kind he was to people in trouble, and how he loved children.

Once, during the Revolutionary War, in Totowa near the home of the Godwin brothers by the Great Passaic Falls, there lived a man who was very sick.

His name was Peter Van Winkle, and because his head grew very fast and was soon too big for his small weak body, he could not walk, and everybody called him a boy. But he was twenty-seven years old.

When General Washington heard about Peter, he took his Army doctor, James Thatcher, to see if anything could be done to make the poor man more comfortable. But the doctor could not help him. General Washington was very sad, and he and Dr. Thatcher stayed and talked to Peter and cheered him up.

Now here is another story about George Washington and a boy named Garret Ackerman who lived in Saddle River.

Although Garret had seen General Washington more than once when the general and his troops passed his father's house, the boy had never been close enough to look into the great man's face.

A great longing soon possessed Garret. He said to himself, "I must look right at General Washington's face. I must see his eyes. I want to have a picture of him in my mind so that I will never, never forget how he looks, as long as I live."

Garret sees George Washington

So Garret often stood by the roadside, waiting, waiting. A regiment of cavalry was encamped in the "flats" over across the Saddle River beyond his father's house. Garret thought perhaps George Washington would soon come to Saddle River again.

One day, the boy heard the clop-clop of horses' hoofs in the distance. The horses came nearer and nearer, kicking up the dust in clouds. Garret climbed on a big rock and screened his eyes with his hands. Then he almost shouted with joy.

He recognized the proud high-stepping white horse that led the band of horsemen. Nearer and nearer the white horse came and then suddenly stopped right in front of the small boy. The great general touched his hat and then, leaning from his saddle, he laid his hand on Garret's head. "You are miller Ackerman's son, are you not, my lad?"

Garret could hardly find his voice to answer, "Yes, Sir." He was so excited. But the man's voice was so kind that Garret found courage to look up into the face above his, and the boy thought that he had never seen eyes so friendly and bright.

The great man and the small boy smiled at each other. Then the general on the proud white horse and his com-

panions disappeared at a brisk pace down the road.

Garret was happy. All his life, he told how kind the great general was, and he never forgot exactly how George Washington looked when he smiled at the little boy in Saddle River.

Through the Ramapo River Valley ran a highway important to General Washington and his troops. On the road stood two farmhouses that had served as headquarters for the General and his staff.

Also on the road was the Ponds Church, with an hexagonal roof, that had been turned into a law court. Here legal records were safeguarded after the British burned the Bergen County courthouse in Hackensack.

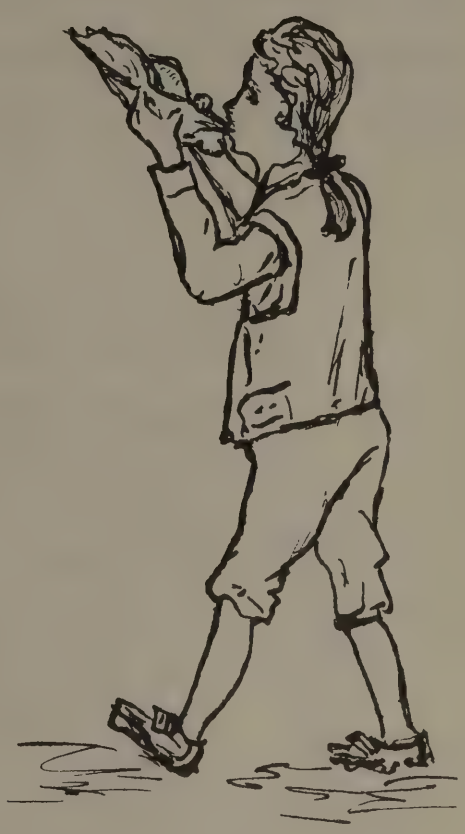
What must the Dutch boys and girls have thought when the Sabbath came and their church was filled with soldiers. Before the War the hexagonal church had been filled with the congregation singing hymns and listening to Dominie Benjamin Van der Linde.

This brave and strong man was minister for two churches and traveled miles on horseback from Ponds to Paramus. That Dutch church was a law court too – and a prison and storehouse besides.

In the brownstone houses snuggled close to the Ramapo hills, children had become accustomed to the thump-thump of horses' hoofs and marching men's feet.

Five times during the War, the sounds were comforting because General Washington and American soldiers were camping nearby. But sometimes a galloping horseman spread warning up and down the Valley Road – "The enemy is coming – hide your provisions," he called out, "hide your horses – hide your women and children – get your guns ready."

The Garrison family quickly obeyed. Big Tom hitched the team of grays and almost before the messenger had disappeared down the road, forced the horses by stinging whip lashes to slip and slide up the mountainside and into the deep woods. There on the well-hidden Cannonball trail the man calmed the excited horses with gentle words until a blast from the conch shell, blown by Young Garrison signaled that danger was past. Only then did Big Tom drive



Young Garrison blowing conch shell.

the precious team down the hill and into the barn.

One day as the sun sank red behind the towering trees on the Ramapo hill-tops, a faint knock on the heavy Dutch door of the Garrison house made everyone stop whatever task was at hand. "Who is that?" whispered young John to his mother. Father Garrison went to the door, gun in hand and called "who's there?"

"Oh – I am wounded – help me." The strange voice ended in a low moan. Father Garrison cautiously opened the upper section of the Dutch door and peered out. A slumped figure on the doorstep was almost completely hidden by dark shadows of deepening twilight.

"Quick – come help," called Father Garrison as he half carried, half dragged the ragged, moaning man into the house. Everybody helped. Blankets were spread on the kitchen hearth. Food and drink were brought. But almost immediately the man died. He never once opened his eyes. He never once spoke a word.

Many, many years have passed. Yet even today, people, when visiting the ancient Garrison house in Ramapo Valley, speak in hushed whispers of the man who lies in an unmarked grave by the side of the busy road.

Was he a spy as some say? Was he an American or enemy soldier? No one will ever know.

One of George Washington's farmhouse headquarters was at the Van Alens' where he slept on the stormy night of July 14, 1777. The next day was fine after the heavy rainstorm. "It is marching weather," the soldiers said as they moved north through Sidman's Cove at Ramapough Pass.

The second headquarters house belonged to Andrew Hopper, believed to have been a trusted American spy. Here the General rested and talked over military secrets when going and coming between Morristown and posts on the Hudson.

Whenever the Commander-in-chief knocked at the Hopper door he was welcomed warmly as an honored friend by both Andrew and his good wife, Maria La Rue Hopper. Soon their little daughter, Anna, learned to love him very much.

Sometimes when the great general rested beside the stone fireplace, the little girl sat on his knee. Sometimes when the tall straight soldier walked in the gardens, the small girl skipped by his side in order to keep up with his long strides. More than once the two stopped to admire an especially beautiful blossom. When the tall man had to bend way, way down to catch the fragrance from the sweet old fashioned roses, little Anna laughed softly to herself in mischievous glee.

Up the road the American troops were encamped in a large field where the General's tent was pitched under a tall spreading yellow pine tree. Maria Hopper, as a Dutch housewife would, realized how much the homesick soldiers missed the meals their mothers and wives used to cook. So she often sent high stacks of hot cakes to the camp and General Washington sat under the wide spreading yellow pine tree and ate and ate.

One night when the General was at the Hopper home, an alarm was sounded – the enemy was coming! Andrew rushed to the door – threw open the upper half – and fired into the darkness. At the same time the General escaped by the back door.

Whether any of these stories are true or not, years and years later, 98 year-old Mrs. Hopper showed a visitor a fine punch bowl and a number of pewter plates that George Washington had given to the family.

Perhaps these gifts were to show how much he valued the Hoppers friendship or how much he enjoyed Mrs. Hopper's fine cooking. Perhaps he wished to recognize Andrew's work as one of his most trusted spies or was so very thankful that his life had been saved.

Whichever way it was, the General's pewter plates be-

came very valuable and are treasured in several museums.

From up Suffern way where the high mountains above the Hudson River were often used as look-out posts during the Revolutionary War, comes another story about General Washington.

Often when the General had headquarters at Suffern's Tavern and the troops were encamped at Sidman's Cove in Ramapough Pass, he climbed up one of the tall peaks called the Torne. From the top of the Torne, the countryside was

spread out like a map. General Washington and his scouts could see for miles up and down the Hudson River to spy enemy ships.

At this time, the British were attempting to sail up the river and capture the important fort at West Point. Therefore, General Washington often spent hours looking through his spy glasses in search of enemy craft.

One day after he had been watching a long time, he looked up at the sun, and by its position in the west, and the long dark shadows on the mountains, the general guessed that the hour was late in the afternoon.

"I wonder if I have guessed the time correctly by the sun," the General said half-aloud to the soldier who had climbed the Torne with him.

He took his large gold watch out of his pocket. Instantly, a terrible thing happened. Down slipped the beautiful gold watch out of his hand. Down it went, down into a deep, deep crevice between the rocks.

General Washington sighed. In wartime, where could he ever find another, he asked himself? Then, after a last look through his spy glass to make sure there were no troops on the trails nor movement of ships on the river, the General

made his way down the mountainside.

Although that happened a very long time ago, some people who climb the Torne Mountain today are sure that they can hear the watch still ticking, ticking, far down in the deep crevice between the rocks.

Of course, there are other people who say that the tick, tick is really only the drip, drip of a hidden fresh water spring as it trickles down in the darkness.

The first part of the story about General Washington using the Torne for a military lookout is true. And if you have a very good imagination, you may also believe the part about the lost gold watch.

ORATAM, CHIEF OF THE HACKENSACKS

The first recorded history of the Lenape or Delaware Indians was discovered by the French scientist, Constantine Samuel Rafinesque. The history, in picture writings, was etched in red on white birch bark. The findings were published under the title of "The American Nations." Rafinesque's translation of the characters, called the "Linapi Annals", revealed the earliest account of New Jersey's Indians.

According to the late Dr. Charles A. Philhower, foremost authority on the New Jersey Indian, the record covers eons of time during which the Lenapes migrated from Northeastern Asia to their final destination on the eastern seacoast. Through the years the Indians journeyed across Bering Strait, made their way to the Rocky Mountains and then east to the "Great Water" (Lake Superior). Crossing the Mississippi River, they trekked to the land of the Rising Sun. Here they found their chosen home on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

In New Jersey, the Lenapes were divided into three sub-tribes. The Munsee, designated the people of the "Stony Country", who lived in the northern section of the state. Their totem pole depicted the wolf. The Unami were the "people down the river" in central Jersey and the turtle was their totem pole symbol. The Unalachtigo were "the people near the ocean" in southern Jersey and they carved the turkey on their totem poles.

An Indian dugout canoe is on exhibition at the Bergen County Historical Museum in the von Steuben House, North Hackensack, New Jersey.

In the early days, Achter Kill was a Jersey Dutch expression that meant the water connecting Newark Bay with the Raritan Bay, in other words, "the water behind Staten Island." A kill is a stream. Today on modern maps the original spelling of Achter Kill has been corrupted into Arthur Kill.

WHITE AND PURPLE GRAPES

Allan Cruickshank, noted ornithologist, stated that the passenger pigeon was a "common migrant" when flying between his northern breeding place and his winter home in the southern states. By September and October 1875 the birds had become very rare. Harry DeVore Winters of Wierimus Road, Hillsdale, who was born in 1874, remembers his grandmother telling how the birds were trapped under a net where feed had been scattered. In those days, the migrating flocks "darkened the sky" over eastern North America. The authority, Mr. Chapman, wrote of seeing two

pigeons in the area of Englewood, New Jersey, in September 1878. At a time when conservation of natural resources was unknown, the passenger pigeons were wantonly slaughtered. Mr. Chapman's observation is the last known record of the pigeon in this area. Little did anyone realize that there could be an end to the supply of this delicacy.

The late Dr. Philhower explained the meaning of the name "Paramus" as originating from the fact that the area "had good ground, where good corn grew and therefore turkeys were plentiful."

Wearimus was a region along the hills, east of Saddle River. The name is also spelled: Weremus, Werimus, Wierimus, and Weerommersa. Although the majority of Indians had left New Jersey by 1730, some were known to have remained years later. Within the 19th Century, according to Sue Hudson in her history of Ho-Ho-Kus, an Indian woman lived below the hill on Bogert Road. She had long black braids and was the wife of a man named King, a Jackson White. The last Indian in Saddle River was called Mashier or Mahshee, who lived in a log cabin to the east of the River. (From the text of an address before the Annual Meeting of the Saddle River Valley Protective Association by J. Hosey Osborn.) The approximate location of Mashier's grave, near the site of his cabin, was pointed out to the author by James Blauvelt of Saddle River in the 1950's.

YACOB AND THE INDIANS

The story of Jacob and the Indians has been handed down by generation after generation of Zabriskies and has been recorded by many writers. One of the earliest historians, the Rev. A. B. Winfield, 1852, wrote: "The Indians stole his [Albert Saboroweskie'] second son Jacob at seven years of age—" Years later after Jacob returned home, the Indians "gave his father the title to the land." This referred to the Paramus Patent of 1702. (Source: "Paramus a Chronicle of Four Centuries," by Fred Wessells Bogert.) Tradition places the site of a house built by Jacob on Paramus Road near present-day Grove Street in Paramus. A corner stone, marked 1713 and believed to have been connected with Jacob's house, was presented to the Bergen County Historical Museum at North Hackensack by the late Everett L. Zabriskie of Ridgewood.

THE SETTLERS BUILD A KIRK

The earliest record of the name, "Peremus Kirk" is found hand written by Dominie Wilhelmus Eltinge in the church "Doop" book under the date 1799. In Holland churches were called Kirks in the northern part of the country while Kerk was used in the southern section. Mrs. Pietje (Penalope) Burenga Postma, a member of the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society in Ridgewood, who was born in Holland, gives the added information that an "oud kirk" is one over 200 years old and that a "niewe kerk" is one less than 200 years old. Also Mrs. Postma told the author that in some provinces today the word is spelled "kerke."

"On the 15th of January 1734, the consistory and congregation of the Paramus Church assembled at the house of Johannes Wynkoop. The following persons were chosen for the purpose of building a church at Paramus, viz.: Conradus Van Derbeek and Johannes Wynkoop [Winfield]." The foundation stone of the church was laid on the 21st of April, 1735, or to quote the exact words inscribed in Dutch on the fly-leaf of the Doop book: *"Den 21 Dagh van April 1735 is de Eerste steen de Kirk Gelegt."*

SCHOOL DAYS IN PARAMUS

The earliest educational instruction in Paramus and the vicinity is believed to date from about 1730 and was under the supervision of the Reformed Church (Peremus Kirk). The museum building – now occupied by the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society – is believed to be the fifth schoolhouse erected by the church on church property. Built in 1872-3 it was designated as District School No. 45; Franklin Township paid the Paramus Church one dollar a year for the lease of the land. At the turn of the century Ridgewood Village leased the use of the school for several years. The building's service as a public school was terminated in 1905. (Source: "Once a School Now a Museum", a booklet for the Paramus Historical and Preservation Society compiled by Museum Staff Members: Beatrice W. Cannon, Sue F. Hudson and Rosa A. Livingston)

Information in addition to that included in the story was obtained from the Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey. In the 18th century a pupil was supplied by his parents with copy books made from rough butchers' paper, folded to make leaves, and home-made ink. Also it is stated that because quill pens were sharpened by a pocket knife the knife became known as a penknife. Children of well-to-do parents might be given slates, but they were not in common use until after 1820.

JOHANNES AND THE ARROW MAKER

The three heart-shaped stones, originally in the eastern wall of the Abraham Ackerman house in Hackensack, were rescued by Ackerman descendants when the house was demolished in 1952. The initials on the stones, A A M, G A M and D A M are those of the builder; his son, Garret; and son David. These rare relics, the property of the family association, the David Ackerman Descendants 1662, were placed for safekeeping in the Paramus Historical and Preservation Museum, 650 East Glen Avenue, Ridgewood.

The Dutch almond cakes, or marchpanes (also called marzipans) were made in many colonial households, particularly in celebration of Twelfth Night. The cakes, often baked by sugar bakers, were placed in molds shaped like animals, birds, flowers, fruits, ladies, babies, kings and queens. Modern marchpanes may be purchased in bakeries.

It is interesting to note that some of the cakes, one dated from 1823,

have survived through the years. At the Henry Francis duPont Collection at Winterthur, Delaware, are at least a half dozen original Christmas cakes that have been framed as wall decorations. The antique hand-made wooden molds are collector's items. At Phillipse Manor Restoration, Tarrytown, New York, there is a Christmas marchpane mold with the date 1563. The olykoeks, or doughnuts were balls of sweetened dough that were fried in hog's fat and these were the ancestors of today's doughnuts.

The story of Johannes and the Arrow-maker is based on family tradition and was told to the author by Mrs. Lampe. She often walked to the "Pine woods above the brook" where the camp was located. Mrs. Lampe remembers being told that her uncle, Abram Ackerman knew where many stone chips could be found. Although the white Victorian house, built by Mrs. Lampe's grandfather, has been demolished, a section of their ancestor's original property has been retained and here members of the family have erected modern homes. In 1763 this property was clearly designated on the historic Ramapock Tract map.

THE HESSIAN BULLET

Paramus Road, one of the oldest highways in Bergen County, is believed to follow an original Indian trail. When New Jersey was a British colony, the trail became a road connecting important county seats, forts and settlements and was known as the "King's Highway." In 1776, the road was a main route linking New England with Pennsylvania and the southern colonies.

The caution of parents in keeping the children near home was well founded as skirmishes continually harrassed the countryside. The French officer, Marquis de Chastellux, was warned against traveling through Paramus when on his way from New England to the American army camp at Preakness, New Jersey.

The brownstone Dutch home where Jane and John Zabriskie lived became a well known landmark and in 1932 was featured in national publications as an example of distinctive architectural design, while the spacious grounds and formal colonial gardens were described as exceptionally beautiful.

HOT BREAD AND BUTTER

The common name for the wooden shovel which Lela used is peel but the Jersey Dutch called it a "lutee." In the 1910 issue of the PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a story named "Hot Bread and Butter." The writer in the PROCEEDINGS placed the incident as occurring "near the familiar old Rosencran's house." (Theodosia Prevost house, known as the Hermitage in present-day Ho-Ho-Kus.)

In 1777, "Aaron Burr was encamped at Ramapo and the British were at Hackensack. One Paul Vanderbeek rode into camp and said that the British were on the way to Paramus and were destroying everything along the route . . ." "Burr met the British and captured the Hessian troops and then fell back to Ramapo. It was during this raid that he met the famous widow Prevost."

THE MASKED BALL

Theodosia Prevost was in a very difficult situation while living within the Jersey Dutch area during the Revolution. She was not only the widow of James Marc Prevost, a British Colonel; but her step-father was Captain Philip deVisme of the British Army. Her two sons were ensigns and her four uncles were serving under the Crown. To quote from Sue Hudson's book, BACKGROUND OF HO-HO-KUS HISTORY: "By the strict law of the state, she and her family would have been compelled to withdraw to the British Army . . . But the lady had earned the respect of the people of her vicinity, and she and her household guarded their conduct so carefully and tactfully that the opposition to them was not very serious."

Madam Prevost's home, the Hermitage, was open to Americans as well as the British. After the battle of Monmouth when part of the trial of General Charles Lee was being held at the Paramus Church, General Washington and his staff were guests for four days and nights. Other notables who visited the Hermitage included Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Hamilton, James Monroe, fifth President of the United States, the Marquis de Lafayette, Benedict Arnold and his lady, Peggy Shippen Arnold.

Colonel Burr's friendship with Madam Prevost developed into sincere love. Their marriage, performed in 1782 by the Rev. Benjamin Vander Linde, dominie of the Paramus Reformed Church, did not take place in the church building. The Rosencrantz family who have occupied the Hermitage since Elijah Rosencrantz purchased the property in June, 1807, have been assured by family tradition that the ceremony took place in their home. The house and grounds are landmarks treasured by Miss Elizabeth Rosencrantz, a direct descendant.

BETSY'S RIDE

The original John Suffern house was burned during the Revolutionary War and the site is marked by a bronze plaque mounted on a large rock. This stands on the lawn of the Methodist church parsonage, Washington and Lafayette Street, Suffern. The story of Betsy was related to the author by Miss Mary Suffern, Altje (Elsie) Suffern Cornell and Robert Suffern – direct descendants of the pioneer settler. Mr. Suffern explained, in a letter dated 1952, why details of Betsy's ride are unavailable. "A lot of papers and Revolutionary records that were left in the house that was rebuilt after the burning of the old one were lost." Mr. Suffern continued, "These papers would, if saved, have been of great value."

In another letter to the author, Mr. Suffern remarked "As to where Betsy stayed over night, I have no idea. The reason that she made the trip, or possibly trips, was that it was thought that a woman could get through the lines – where a man would be suspected..."

The illustration of John Suffern reading the dispatch, shows the tall case clock (grandfather's clock) purchased by him in Belfast, Ireland. Pasted inside the door of the clock is the information, "About 1775" written in the original owner's handwriting. The wing chair in the picture belonged to the Suffern progenitor and the ladder back chair was handmade by a craftsman in Paramus. Both of the chairs are in the home of Miss Mary and her sister, Altje, which stands on original Suffern property in present-day Hillburn, New York.

INDIAN COUNTRY

The Indians of North Jersey built their homes by bending branches which they covered with bark and animal skins. These houses were called wickams and somewhat resembled the Quonset huts used in World War II.

The Sterling iron mines were located near the present-day Sterling gardens in New York State. Ringwood is now a State Park. Here once lived Robert Erskine, General Washington's cartographer. It was used by the commander-in-chief and was later the home of the Hewitts, a prominent New York City family.

The mystic beauty of Passaic Falls, the haunt of early Indians, has inspired many curious and fanciful tales. The Paramus Historical and Preservation Society in Ridgewood possesses a little book relating tales of goblins, fairies and Indian hunters.

FIFE AND DRUM

The demoralizing retreat of General Washington and his troops across "the Jerseys" happened in 1776. It was earlier during that year that a number of American soldiers pursued by the British were assisted by Capt. Godwin. It will be noted that Abraham and David were with the troops at White Plains and Fishkill at the time of the 1776 retreat. It was in December of the same year that they joined the 5th Regiment at Fishkill and they remained there throughout the winter of 1777. The next spring Abraham and David were ordered to Fort Montgomery (near West Point on the western shore of the Hudson River) where they assisted in the work of stretching the chain across the river to Fort Constitution. This is now preserved as an historic site where may be seen a bronze plaque showing where the chain was secured near the shore.

THREE CHEERS FOR THE GODWINS

Copies of the remarkable saga of the Godwin family were given to the author by a direct descendant, Robert Atterbury of Ridgewood, New Jersey. From these family records the three stories on the Godwins were written. Abraham Godwin died on October 5, 1835 and his brother, David, on January 31, 1852. In his will Abraham provided that "All my pictures of my own drawings shall be collected together and disposed of amicably among my children, – that my other pictures, scraps of poetry, etc. (if any there should be found worth preserving) shall be divided up as aforesaid"; his gold epaulets to his son, Abraham; his sword, chapeau and sash to his grandson, Abraham H. Godwin. The Atterbury family are proud possessors of many ancestral heirlooms.

AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER

The original church served a variety of military uses: barracks, a hospital, prison and headquarters for General George Washington. The church is shown on maps made in 1778-79 for the Continental Army by Robert Erskine. In 1780, plans for fortifying the churchyard were drawn up but never carried out. (Source: Library of Congress) It is reported that the British were encamped on a knoll south of the church and the army of Washington just to the north. Many soldiers of both armies lie buried under the field stones in the old graveyard. For 65 years the first church served a congregation distributed over an area of 15 square miles. The old church building was entirely demolished in 1799 and in one year the present church was completed. The old sandstones were placed in the new walls. The services were conducted in Dutch; there were no lights, except from candles; nor stove heat. (Source: the Rev. and Mrs. Henry D. Cook)

There were changes in the homes by the turn of the century. Many homesteads were enlarged. Some people added whole units to their brown stone houses, some literally raised the roofs, thus converting attic space into second stories. Dormer windows were introduced, letting light and air into sleeping rooms with low ceilings and very small windows. Improved roads and stage coaches, one ran north and south over Paramus Road, greatly improved travel and communications.

Red Mills, or Zabriskie Mills, was built by Jacob, the grandson of the original Zabriskie settler. Because of its situation at the junction of important roads, it became a stopping place for drovers of cattle, farmers on their way to market and stagecoach travelers. Some writers assert that Gen. Washington and his men passed the mill and that Aaron Burr was entertained there. The Marquis de Lafayette visited the old mill when he returned to America in 1825. Today even the site of the mill has been made completely unrecognizable by the construction and intersection of Route 17 and Route 4.

THE COWBOY OF THE RAMAPOS

Claudius Smith has been described as the "most daring marauder, a thorough scoundrel, one of the worst bandits that the country has ever known." Smith's father was David Smith, born on Long Island in 1701, and his mother was Jerusha Rumsey. When the family moved to the west side of the Hudson River, they settled on a farm at the north end of the Ramapo Valley. Claudius grew up in "comfortable circumstances and secured a rather better education than many of the neighboring families could afford to give their sons." Young Smith developed into a fearless, impetuous and overbearing man. However one incident occurred that unnerved him. On a stormy night while in the woods, Claudius came to a hut where the fortune-teller, Old Hester, lived. She read his palm and forecast Katherine Onderdunk's refusal of his marriage proposal. The one redeeming view to his character reports Smith giving aid to the wife of Col. James McClaughy, American Army, by playing the role of Robin Hood and stealing food from a neighbor. Finally his nefarious deeds caught up with him and Smith was executed in Goshen, New York, in 1779. (Source: writings by the late John C. Storms, Pascack Historical Society, Park Ridge, New Jersey and NOW AND THEN AND LONG AGO by Cornelia F. Bedell, Rockland County, New York.)

TAKE YOUR CHOICE

On old deeds the name for the river is spelled "Sadel" and "Sadle" – it was later anglicized to Saddle. (Source: Miss Dorothy Ware of Saddle River, family deeds and also Miss Bertha Blauvelt's scrapbook on Saddle River.) It is believed by some that the two Scotchmen, Captain Matthew Nicoll and Richard Stellwell from Argyllshire, Scotland, gave the river its name. The derivation is from an old scotch name "Sagairt", meaning the "Plain of the Priest." J. Hosey Osborn at an annual meeting of the Saddle River Valley Protective Association stated that, "In this valley in Scotland on the banks of the river is a ruin of an old temple, hence the name."

THE GREAT ROCK CALLED PAIN-MAIK-A-PU'-KA

The story of the Great Rock, the children and David Marinus was told to the author by Mrs. James Berdan Merrill of Glen Rock. Mrs. Merrill is Maude, in the story, and Captain Marinus was her ancestor. The father of Captain D. Marinus was the Rev. David Meremus – note difference in spelling – who was dominie from 1752-1773 for three churches at Acquackanonck (Passaic), Totowa and the 1st Reformed Church at Pompton Plains. His portrait, painted on wood, is hanging in the Ford Museum, Deerborn, Michigan. Early Jersey names connected with the family genealogy include: Berdan, Gerreson, Ackerman, Gotchies, Brinkerhoff and Doremus.

The historic erratic rock was believed to be, by Dr. Philhower, one of the most important Indian relics preserved today. Excerpts from Willard DeYoe's article in the Paterson Evening News, 1952, states: "In a deed, dated December 10, 1709, and made by an Agent of the General Board of Proprietors of East Jersey to a group of enterprising men, and purporting to convey some 42,500 acres of land, the Ramapo Tract, in north-eastern New Jersey, is a monument or landmark in the southerly boundary of the land-tract. It is described in the deed as 'a great rock, or stone called Pammackapuka'. [Note spelling] ..."

"About 1910," wrote Frank J. Dominick in the ERIE RAILROAD MAGAZINE, April, 1950, "when grading was under way in the vicinity of Rock Road and Doremus Avenue, necessary excavations uncovered the rock to its present dimensions. Some persons wanted it destroyed... but more civic minds prevailed and the huge boulder was preserved.... After World War I a tablet bearing the names of Glen Rock men who had served in uniform was affixed to the stone, doubling its historic associations with the borough...."

THE MYSTERIOUS SWORD

In 1780 when the American troops were quartered to the east of Paramus Church, an attack by the Royal Horse Guards came from the north while foot soldiers led by the 42nd Scottish Highlanders, Black Watch, came from the south. When defending the American camp, Col. Byles was wounded, many men were taken prisoners and military stores destroyed. The British, on discovering that Lt. Col. Howard's sword was missing, thought it was in Col. Byles' possession. A search of his quarters proved unsuccessful. Tradition reports that the sword was found in the Banta barn and that it was allowed to remain in their possession after General Washington was reassured that the Banta family were true patriots. (Source: Willard DeYoe, Sue Hudson and early British newspapers.)

WILD STRAWBERRIES

John Suffern came to America from Ireland in 1763; then ten years later he moved to a section of the Ramapo Valley, known as "Point of the Mountains." He purchased land and renamed it "New Antrim" after his birthplace. The first Suffern home – in the center of present-day Suffern, New York – was a large house on the King's Highway, which ran from King's Ferry to Stony Point. During his lifetime, John Suffern purchased many acres of land in the village of Suffern and the eastern part of Ramapo Valley, which included the village of Hillburn. A staunch Whig, John Suffern was host not only to General Washington when the Army was encamped in the Ramapo Valley in 1777 but to Alexander Hamilton, General George Clinton and Aaron Burr. Throughout the Revolutionary War, John Suffern was Justice of the Peace and a member of the Committee of Safety for Orange County.

Within Hillburn there was a certain parcel of land, known as Sydman's Clove, where the American Army encamped. In 1903 this parcel of land was deeded by James Bogert Suffern, a descendant, to the Daughters of the Revolution, a patriotic society in New Jersey. A bronze plaque, mounted on a boulder, is inscribed: "This Boulder marks the route of General Washington and his troops from Fort Lee to Ramapaugh during the Revolutionary War 1776-1781." Today these entrenchments and original breastworks, located on Route 17 in Hillburn, New York, are owned and maintained by the Ramapo Valley Chapter, Daughters of the Revolution, Ridgewood, New Jersey.

And where is the wild strawberry patch? According to Altje Suffern Cornell, the Good Samaritan Hospital now stands on the land which was once the original Suffern farm. (Source: Suffern Family records, and old newspaper records in possession of the author.)

STORIES ABOUT GEORGE WASHINGTON

The home of Garret Ackerman, son of Abraham, stands in Saddle River today and is a fine example of Dutch Colonial architecture. Garret and his father were direct descendants of David Ackerman, who migrated from Holland in 1662. Miss Annie Ackerman of Saddle River who told the story of Garret to the author, belonged to the same family. Many other descendants of the pioneer Ackerman live in the vicinity and throughout the United States.

The Van Alan Headquarters house in Oakland was also spelled Vanaulen. Here General Washington wrote to the President of Congress describing the condition of the countryside: "a very fatiguing March, owing to the Roads which have become extremely deep and miry from the late Rains." (Copied by the author from the scrapbook, "Old Homes in and Near Oakland" compiled by Harry Gale McNomee.)

The first Ponds church, built of logs, was founded in 1710 and was the sixth Dutch church established in New Jersey. The location of the church was called "de Panna" by the early settlers because of several small nearby bodies of water. In 1740, the first building was replaced by a brown sandstone church which was hexangular in shape. It was in this church that the Bergen County records were kept after the British burned the courthouse in Hackensack, New Jersey. Today the fifth church building of this original congregation stands in the village of Oakland, several blocks north of the first site. This is marked by a bronze plaque mounted on a large boulder. (Sources: THE CHURCH OF THE PONDS 1710-1735, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 225th ANNIVERSARY, 1935; Robert Erskine's Revolutionary War map; notes by Harry Gale McNomee, 1935; and information from David Bush.)

Miss Katherine Garrison of Ramsey, New Jersey, related to the author the tragic story of the American post rider that occurred in her ancestral home on the Ramapo Valley Road. The ancient stone house has

been carefully preserved in a setting of fine old trees; however, it is no longer owned by the Garrison family. The original kitchen is in the right wing where the Dutch half door leads into a room with deeply recessed windows, beamed ceiling and the historic fireplace where the unknown soldier died. Miss Garrison's pioneer ancestor was Abraham Garretson who came to America from Holland in 1635. At the time of the Revolutionary War story, the Garrisons owned a slave named "Tom". Two prized family heirlooms, the conch shell and a large needle used by the Garrisons in thatching roofs were presented to the Bergen County Historical Society Museum.

Although some discredit the story of Andrew Hopper saving Gen. Washington's life, a memorandum by Henry O. Havemeyer dated April 20, 1937 and a letter written by Erskine Hewitt on May 3, 1937 both support the historic happening. Mr. Havemeyer on whose property the Revolutionary incident occurred wrote in part: "It seems that Andrew Hopper was host to Washington on many occasions. At one time, he was staying there, an English foraging party came to the house and almost captured Washington, who ran out the back door.... Old man Andrew Hopper, opening the top half of the door, fired his muzzle loader point blank out into the dark and killed the English officer in command and wounded the second and one trooper who then ran off. To compensate him for saving him from capture, Washington had given Andrew Hopper part (42 plates) of his camp outfit containing forty-eight plates."

"Erskine Hewitt told me that his father, the late Abram S. Hewitt, had tried for years to purchase these plates from old Henry Hopper Hagerman [great grandson of Andrew] but he would never part with them. Sometime about 1889, old Dr. Zabriskie, who lived in Suffern, New York, ... said that (Hagerman) was very hard pressed, and that he believed if Mr. Hewitt would give him $1,500.00 he could buy the plates – with the understanding that old Hagerman could keep them during his life-time." This arrangement was negotiated.

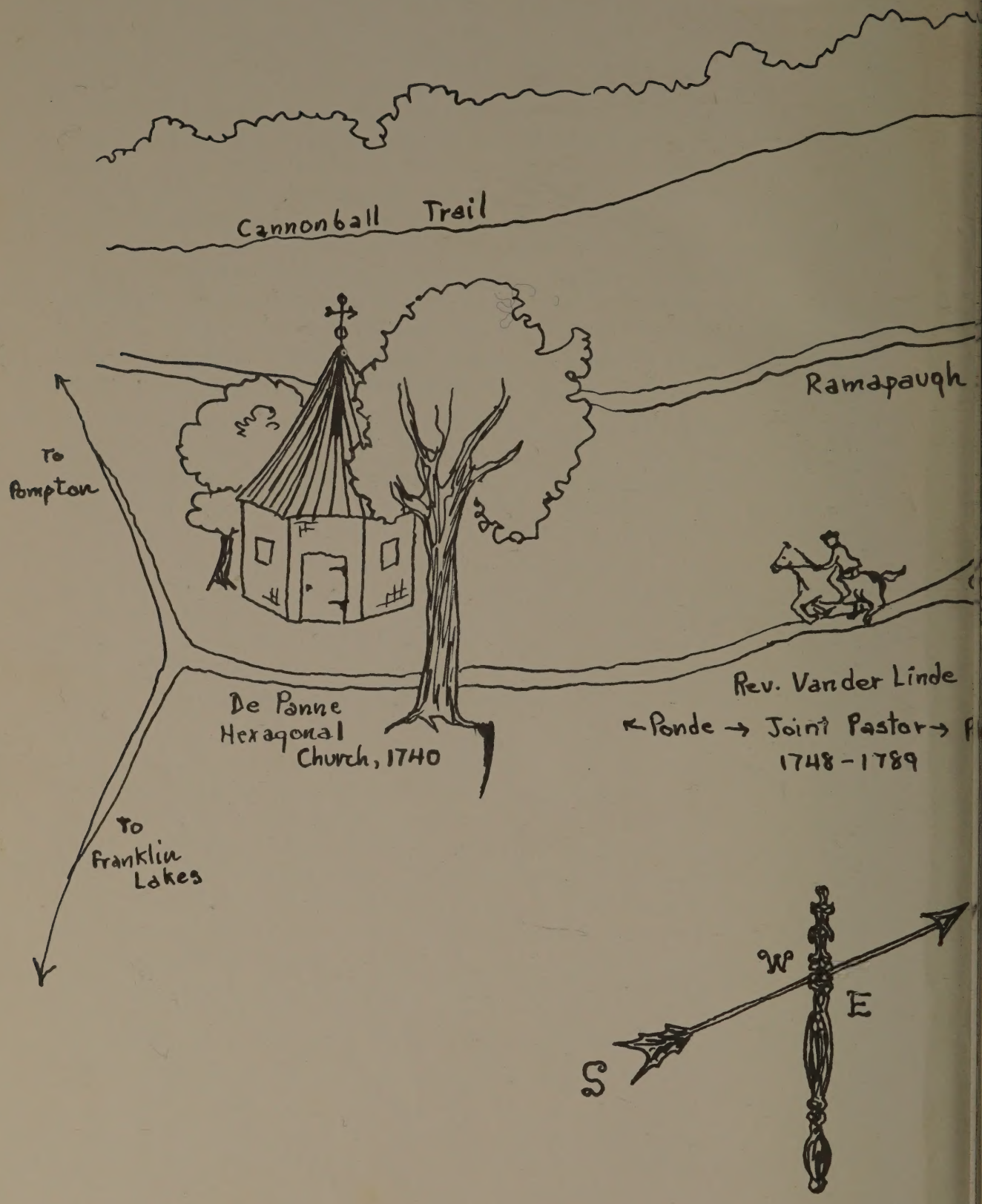
To continue the memorandum: "Erskine tells me that his father had forty-one pewter plates from Washington's camp outfit, and the other six are in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C., together with the case in which they belong, and that there are places for the forty-eight plates..."

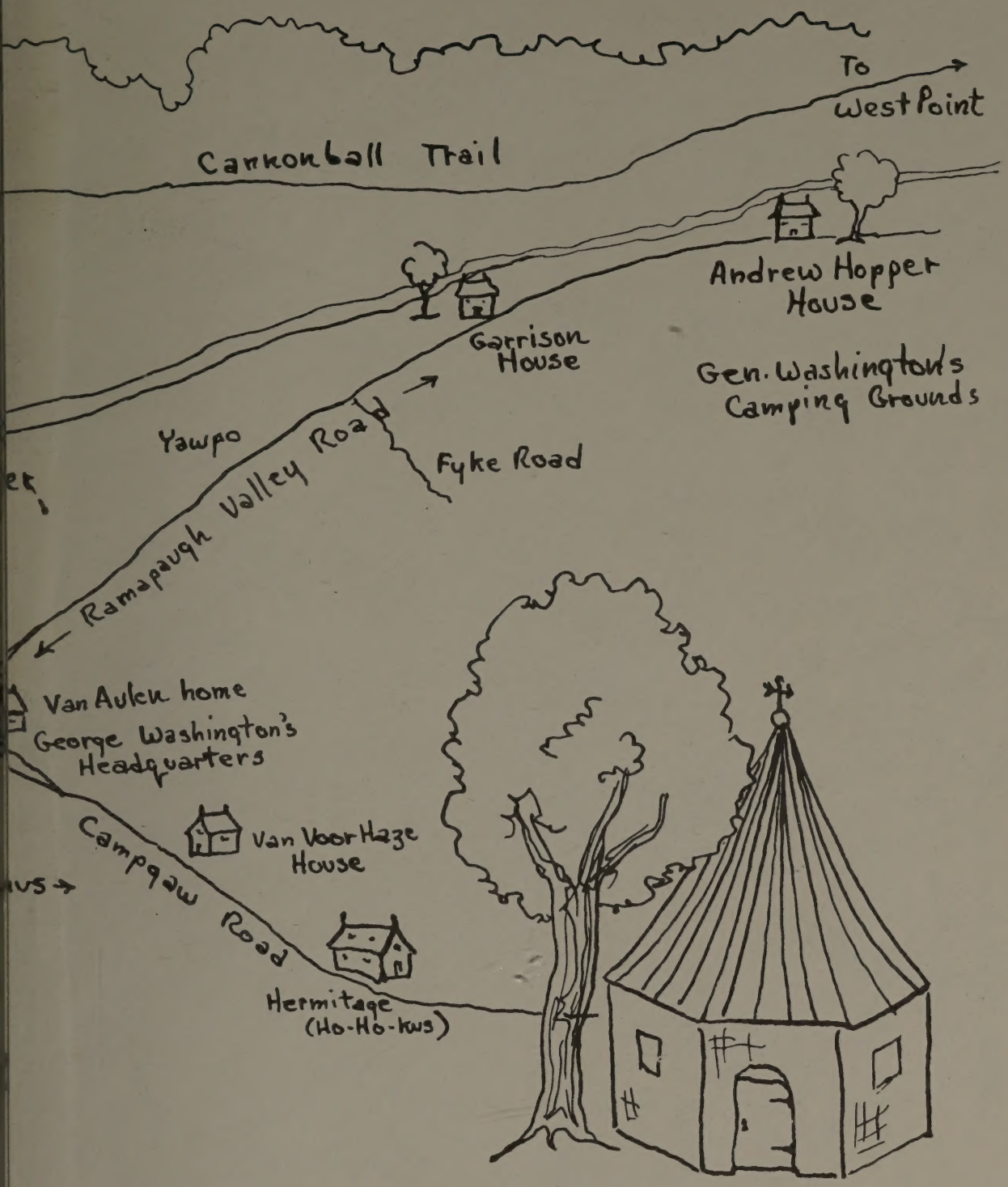
Mr. Havemeyer gives the following interesting information. In 1879, the late Theodore A. Havemeyer purchased the property from Hagerman on which the Hopper House stood. "The Hopper House that my father demolished about 1890... [contained] ...a large stone fireplace, the stone of which father preserved and put in the kitchen in the new servants' wing, as he had been told that Washington used to sit before this fireplace in this old Hopper House.... I have made this memorandum that this information may not be lost and that history may have some earmark to identify the old Andrew Hopper Hagerman Inn, the property which is today known as Mountain Side Farm."

From Mr. Hewitt's letter to Mr. Havemeyer added information included: "Whenever Washington passed up and down through Ramapo Valley, he used to spend the night at Hopper's ... he left forty-two plates with Hopper, taking six to go on with. These plates are all Britannia metal and have Braddock's coat-of-arms on the back ... initials of some of Braddock's staff are scratched on the backs of some ... [this] would tend to show that they were picked up at Braddock's defeat, by Washington, when in command of the rear guard." Somehow between the time Hagerman sold the plates to the elder Mr. Hewitt and the former's death when the set of plates should have come into the possession of the Hewitt family, one plate had disappeared. How long the 41 plates remained at Ringwood Manor, the Hewitt estate, is a matter of conjecture. To add further complications as to the whereabouts of the camping set is the information given to the author that some of the plates had been presented to the Washington Headquarters, Newburgh, New York, by the late Hon. Abram S. Hewitt who was mayor of New York City in 1888. But according to Major Kenneth Miller, museum director, no record of such a gift could be found in the files at Newburgh.

What appears to be a conclusive disposition of the 41 plates – as far as the writer is able to establish – is found in the following. In 1936, Erskine Hewitt, then owner of Ringwood Manor, presented the estate to New Jersey to be used as an historic shrine. It was not until 1939 that the property was actually deeded over and accepted by the State. At this time many documents, relics, furniture, art objects etc. of incalculable value were sold. With them on the auction block went the pewter plates. Proof of this, received by the author was taken from the present files at Ringwood Park by Mrs. Edward Tholl of Upper Saddle River and Mr. Alexander S. Waldran connected with the Park: "Washington's Camp Service, --41 pieces---were sold at auction, Park-Bennet."

To return to the 42nd missing plate, one solution given by some writers is that it was in the possession of Harriet Beecher Stowe. She was known to have made frequent visits to the Hagermans. But in contradiction to this superstition is the more likely story told to the author by the late Edith Fillmore Millard. Miss Millard, daughter of Nehemiah Fillmore Millard, Bergen County judge and cousin of President Fillmore, stated that her father had been presented with a Washington pewter plate by Hagerman. There is an entry in the Judge's handwritten diary which records his attendance at court held at Hagerman's Inn in 1879. Years later, according to Miss Millard, after the Judge's death, his widow sold the relic to an unknown purchaser. Who are the owners of the 48 plates? The answer at this present writing remains an intriguing and baffling enigma.


Cannonball Trail
Ramapaugh
To Pompton
De Panne Hexagonal Church, 1740
Rev. Van der Linde
← Ponde → Joint Pastor →
1748 - 1789
To Franklin Lakes
W
E
S



Octagonal Peremus Kirk
1735-1800
New Parsonage for
Domine Van der Linde